SONIC™
THE HEDGEHOG

THE

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COLLECTION

05

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SONIC™ THE HEDGEHOG

THE IDW COLLECTION

05

SEGA®

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COLORS BY MATT HERMS
LETTERS BY SHAWN LEE

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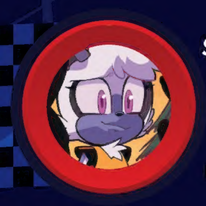

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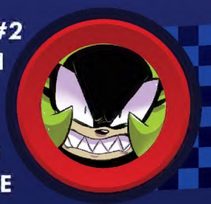

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ART BY ADAM BRYCE THOMAS

WINTERBURG.

HOLD STILL YOU MISERABLE--!

I KNOW IT'S BEEN AWHILE, BUT IS THAT ANY WAY TO BREAK THE ICE?

NO! NO TIRESOME ICE PUNS!

BZZRT

FINE. WE'LL SKIP TO ME STOPPING YOUR CONQUEST OF THIS QUAINT LITTLE TOWN!

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS FROST-BITTEN HAMLET! I'M HUNTING ZETI--**EEP!**

ZAVOK AND HIS DEADLY SIX ARE ON THE LOOSE! I NEED TO TAKE THEM OUT BEFORE THEY CAUSE MORE TROUBLE!*

AND SINCE YOU'RE TOO INEPT TO HANDLE THEM...!

*STH: BAD GUYS #1-4--EDS.

ME? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO INVITED THEM TO YOUR PLAGUE-A-PALOOZA! THEY'RE YOUR FAULT!

NO, THAT WAS STARLINE'S HAREBRAINED IDEA TO MAKE THINGS "BETTER!"**

AND HE WAS *YOUR* LACKEY! SO YOUR FAULT!

**STH#25 --EDS.

BZZ ZRT

HE'S NO LONGER AFFILIATED WITH ME!

YOU'VE GOT A LIST OF EVIL DEEDS A MILE LONG AND YOU'RE TRYING TO WEASEL OUT OF THIS ONE WITH SEMANTICS?

I HAVE A REPUTATION TO UPHOLD!

FORGET "EGGMAN." I'M CALLING YOU "DR. NUTJOB" FROM NOW ON.

SO ZAVOK IS ALIVE! THEN WHY HASN'T HE COME TO GATHER US?

WE'RE EACH FORMIDABLE, BUT WE NEED HIS LEADERSHIP...

UNACCEPTABLE!

BZZZRT

BACK TO "BALDY MCNOSEHAIR" IT IS THEN!

THAT'S NOT FUNNY! IT'S NEVER BEEN FUNNY! IT'S NEVER GOING TO BE FUNNY!

PERHAPS HE'S WOUNDED? THE WEAK *SHOULD* BE LEFT BEHIND...

...BUT THESE ARE EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

I'LL BEGIN RALLYING THE OTHERS. TRY TO MEET HIM HALFWAY. HANG ON, MY FORMER APPRENTICE...

"...OUR WAR IS NOT OVER!"

ELSEWHERE...

RRGH... NO FARTHER... I MUST REST...

I HAD PLANNED TO TAKE A WHOLE ARMY FROM EGGMAN.*

ALL I HAVE TO SHOW FOR MY EFFORTS IS ONE ROBOT...

*STH: BAD GUYS #1-4, AGAIN--EDS.

I WAS THE MIGHTIEST ON LOST HEX...

...THEN I FOUGHT SONIC AND EGGMAN...

...SUFFERED ONE HUMILIATING DEFEAT AFTER ANOTHER...

...BEATEN... BROKEN... WOULD BE SO EASY... TO SURRENDER...

...NO. NEVER.

DEFEAT IS ONLY A FOUNDATION FOR REVENGE.

CONNECT TO THE EGGNET. ACTIVATE YOUR GPS.

FIND WHICH IS CLOSEST: RIVERSIDE, VISTA VIEW, ORCHARDVILLE, SUNSET CITY, OR WINTERBURG.

THE OTHERS WON'T HAVE STRAYED FAR FROM WHERE I SENT THEM.*

I WILL NEED THE FULL MIGHT OF THE DEADLY SIX TO FULFILL MY REVENGE.

*STH #25, AGAIN--EDS.

AND THEN WE WILL LAY WASTE TO *EVERYTHING.*

RIVERSIDE.

C'MERE...
C'MERE...
C'MERE...!

GAK
SPFF
BLEH

STUPID FISH... I'M HUNGRY...

WHAT.
ARE.
YOU.

DOING?

TH-THE PEOPLE GOT TURNED BACK TO NORMAL! THEY OVER-WHELMED ME AND KICKED ME OUT!

YOU ARE *ZETI*. YOU ARE OF THE *DEADLY SIX*. YOU DO NOT *SURVIVE*. YOU *CONQUER*.

DO YOU STILL HAVE THE MOON MECH?

YEAH! I STASHED IT NOT TOO FAR FROM HERE.

SUMMON IT.

OUR *REVENGE* BEGINS *NOW*.

SOON...

WRAP THEM TIGHT, DOCTOR. I WILL HEAL FAST WITH THE PROPER SUPPORT.

Y-YES, SIR. TH-THEN MAY I T-TEND TO MY NEIGHBORS?

NO.

THIS TOWN WAS PRISTINE BEFORE WE BEGAN. DID YOU DO *NOTHING* WITH THE ZOMBOTS?

OF COURSE I TORE STUFF UP! BUT SOMETHING CALLED "THE RESTORATION" ROLLED IN AND FIXED EVERYTHING. THE JERKS.

"THE RESTORATION..."

LATER.
VISTA VIEW.

I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW GOOD THE TOWN LOOKS!

IT'S ALL THANKS TO THE RESTORATION! IT'S LIKE THE METAL VIRUS NEVER TOUCHED THIS PLACE!

IT'S NOT FAIR! YOU CAN'T HAVE A FEAST AND NOT LET ME... *DUH*, FEAST!

YOU KNOW THE DEAL. YOU BEHAVE AND WE FEED YOU ON THE HOUR.

OR SHOULD I GIVE THIS TO SOMEONE ELSE?

I'LL BE GOOD.

GOOD BOY.

SKYOW!

WHA-HA-HA! PARTY'S OVER, CHUMPS!

AND I THOUGHT I'D FOUND ZAZZ IN A PATHETIC STATE...

I WAS WEAK WITH HUNGER! NOW I ONLY GET THREE MEALS A DAY! LEMME OUT SO I CAN EAT 'EM UP!

CRACK

YOU ARE ZETI. YOU ARE OF THE DEADLY SIX. YOU DO NOT ACCEPT RATIONED FEEDINGS.

YOU CONSUME ALL.

ROOOAAAUGH

EVERYONE TO THE DESIGNATED SHELTER!

GAK

YOU. YOU SERVE THIS "RESTORATION?"

S-SECURITY CORPS. W-WE STOP B-BADNIKS FROM ATTACKING THE RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS...

SO YOU... REBUILD? PROTECT? THIS IS NOT THE ZETI WAY. *EXPLAIN.*

B-BETWEEN THE WAR AND THE PLAGUE, W-WE'VE GOT TO LOOK OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER.

W-WE'VE COME A LONG WAY BY WORKING TOGETHER AND...

YOU STRIVE TO UNDO ALL THAT MY KIND HAS DONE.

YOU WORKED SO WELL TOGETHER. NOW *SUFFER* TOGETHER!

LATER...

IT FEELS SO GOOD TO BE WRECKING STUFF AGAIN! LET'S BURN DOWN THIS FOREST!

LATER. WE HAVE MANY MILES TO GO BEFORE THE PACK IS AT FULL STRENGTH.

PRUDENT, BUT WRONG. HELLO, ZAVOK.

MASTER ZIK!

I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF ROUNDING UP THE OTHERS SO THAT WE MIGHT ALL REGROUP SOONER.

A WISE COURSE OF ACTION, MASTER. WELL DONE.

WE ARE THE DEADLY SIX ONCE MORE. WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE US DO?

WE MARCH BACK THE WAY YOU CAME. WE FIND THE TOWNS THAT SO FOOLISHLY RESISTED US. AND WE *RAZE THEM TO THE GROUND.*

...THAT'S IT?

THEY ARE BUT THE FIRST TO SUFFER OUR REVENGE. THERE WILL BE MUCH MORE TO FOLLOW.

I UNDERSTAND THE DESIRE, BUT IT'S TOO OBVIOUS. I TRUST YOU'VE LEFT NOTHING BUT MISERY IN YOUR WAKE?

I'D ASSUMED THE SCREAMS LED YOU TO US.

AND SO YOU'VE BEGUN TO SET A PATTERN.

WE ARE *FAR* FROM LOST HEX, SO WE CANNOT RETURN HOME. WE ARE IN THE LANDS OF OUR ENEMIES, WHO ARE NUMEROUS AND ORGANIZED.

IT WON'T TAKE THEM LONG TO REALIZE OUR TARGETS AND PREPARE FOR US.

THEN WE FACE THEM ON THE BATTLEFIELD! WE ROUT THEM OR FALL IN GLORIOUS BATTLE!

AN ACCEPTABLE END TO BE SURE, BUT WE CAN ACHIEVE SO MUCH MORE.

YOU'VE HEARD OF THE RESTORATION, YES? THEY BRING SAFETY, STABILITY, AND WORST OF ALL, HOPE.

TEAR IT OUT BY THE ROOTS, AND THE WORLD HAS NO MEANS OF RECOVERING FROM OUR VICIOUSNESS.

WISE COUNSEL, MASTER.

WE WILL MARCH FOR THE NEAREST TOWN AS I SAID.

WE WILL FIRMLY ESTABLISH OUR PATTERN OF ATTACK BY RUINING ALL THAT STANDS THERE.

AS THE HEROES RUSH TO DEFEND THE OTHER TWO TOWNS, WE WILL INSTEAD DOUBLE-BACK AND ASSAULT THE RESTORATION'S BASE WHEN ITS DEFENSES ARE AT THEIR WEAKEST.

NOW THAT IS A PLAN.

DEADLY SIX.

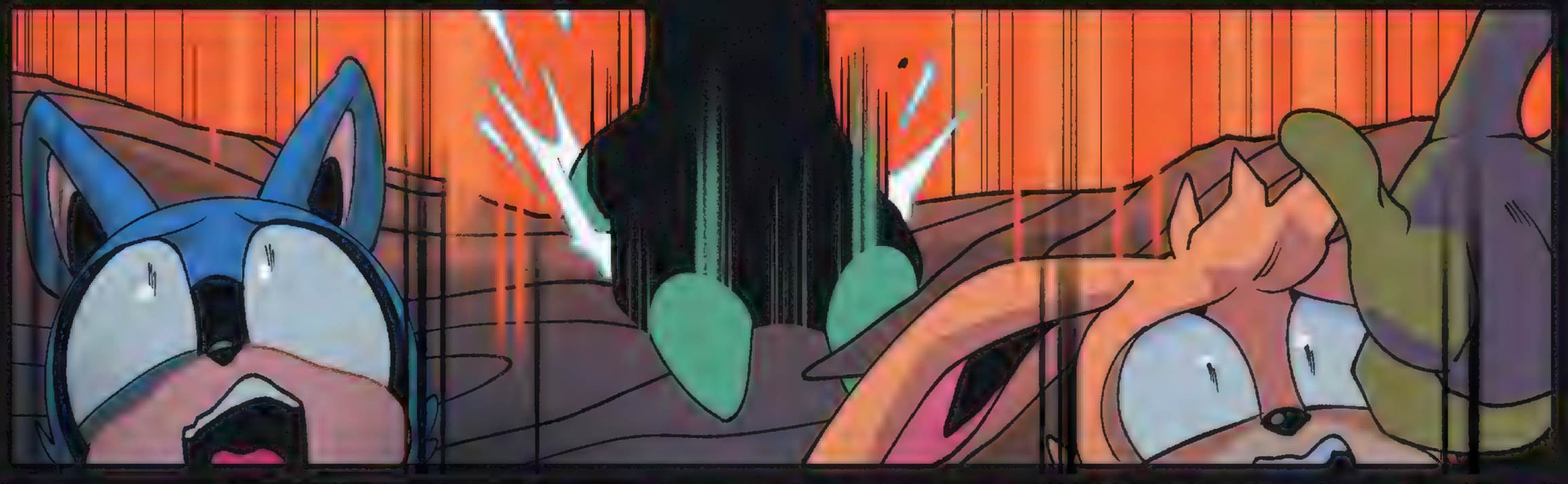
MARCH.

ORCHARDVILLE.

THERE'S MORE OF THOSE THINGS?!

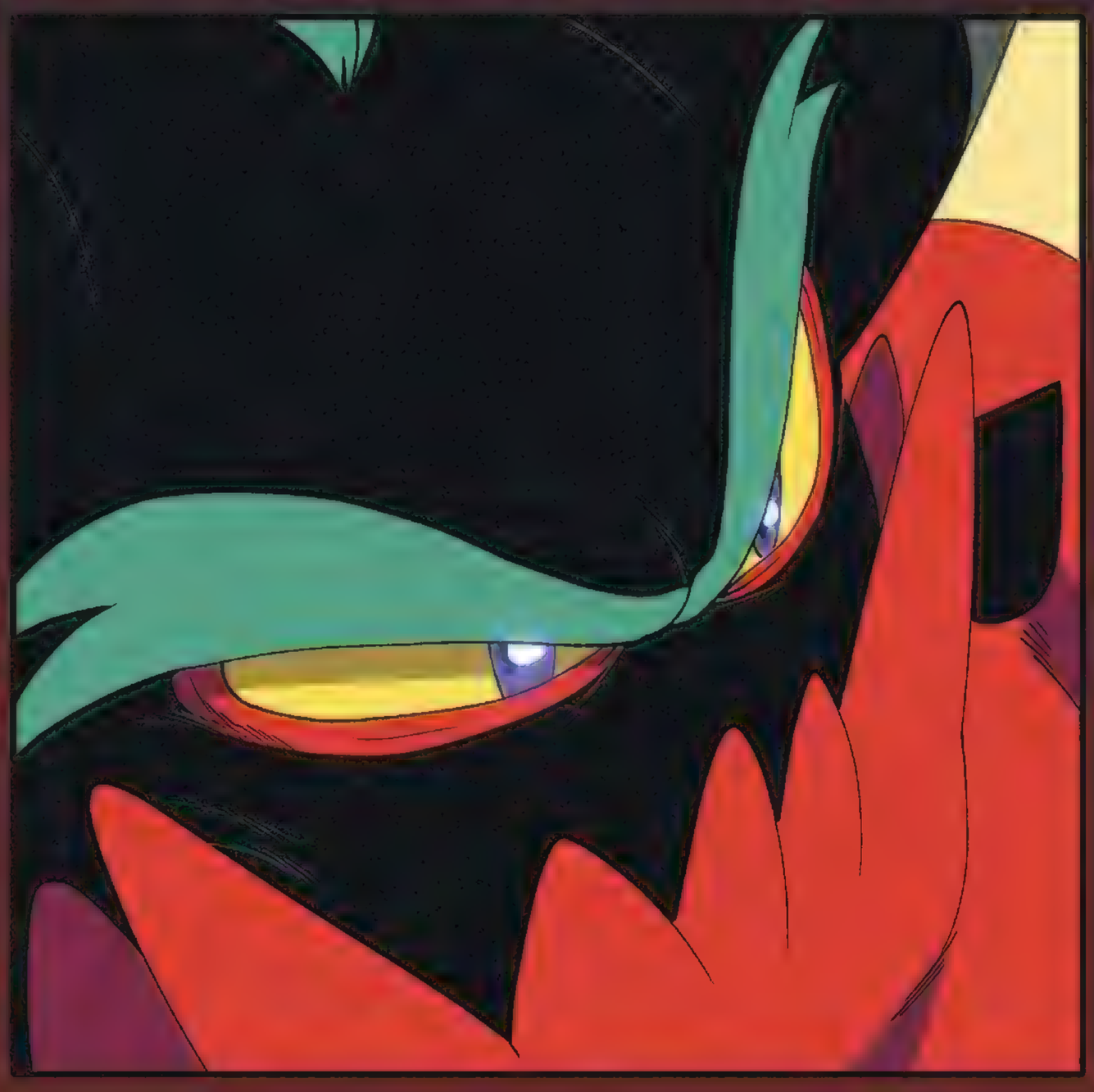
THAT RUNTY ONE WAS BAD ENOUGH!

THUD



PATHETIC. THIS TOWN FELL SO EASILY. I DO HOPE THE OTHERS PUT UP SOME FIGHT.

I'LL DISTRACT HIM. YOU HAVE TO SEND WORD TO THE OTHERS.



LATER. RESTORATION HQ.

WOWEE-WOWEE-WOW!

THIS IS MUCH COOLER THAN THE OLD HEADQUARTERS!

INDEED. A LOT OF WORK WAS PUT INTO IT AFTER WE ACCIDENTALLY DESTROYED THE OLD ONE.*

YEAH... WE PROBABLY SHOULD OFFER THEM A DISCOUNT ON ACCOUNT OF THAT...

*STH#22-EDS.

HEY, THERE! WE'RE *THE CHAOTIX.* JEWEL SENT FOR US.

OH? I'LL ANNOUNCE YOU.

"ANNOUNCE"...?

DIRECTOR JEWEL! THE CHAOTIX DETECTIVE AGENCY TO SEE YOU, MA'AM!

THANK YOU FOR COMING SO QUICKLY, VECTOR!

ER... OUR PLEASURE.

WE'VE HAD A RASH OF VIOLENT ATTACKS THAT DON'T SEEM TO BE EGGMAN-RELATED.

THE SURVIVORS SPOKE OF "HORNED MONSTERS."

THE DEADLY SIX.

THAT WAS QUICK!

LOOK HERE. I FOUGHT ZAZZ IN RIVERSIDE.* TAILS AND AMY FOUGHT ZOMOM IN VISTA VIEW, WHILE SILVER AND WHISPER TOOK DOWN ZOR IN ORCHARDVILLE.

AND WE KNOW ZAVOK ESCAPED FROM EVERHOLD PRISON.**

*STH#26-28--EDS.
**STH: BAD GUYS #1--EDS.

YOU'VE ALREADY FIGURED OUT WHAT'S GOING ON?

IT'S A PRETTY OPEN-AND-SHUT CASE. THE D-SIX ARE OUT FOR REVENGE, AND THEY GOT SLOPPY.

WE CAN EASILY DEDUCE WHERE THEY'LL STRIKE NEXT!

"AND THEN THE CHAOTIX DETECTIVE AGENCY CAN HANDLE THE REST!"

WINTERBURG.

WHA-BOOM

CURSE YOU, SONIC! THIS ISN'T THE END!

YEAH... NOT UNTIL YOU GET A CLUE AND GIVE UP THE VILLAIN SCHTICK.

STILL, THAT WAS A FUN FEW DAYS. GET BACK TO BASICS, BLOW UP AN EGG BASE...

...I THINK I'LL TAKE SOME TIME OFF. HELP REBUILD, ENJOY THE TOWN FOR A BIT, MAYBE--

BREEP-BREEP

--OR NOT...?

WASSUP, TAILS?

BAD NEWS! THE DEADLY SIX ARE ON THE MOVE!

FANCY THAT. EGGMAN AND I WERE TALKING ABOUT THEM EARLIER.

WHAT?!

TELL YOU LATER. GOT ANY DETAILS?

THE CHAOTIX HAVE NARROWED DOWN THEIR TARGETS TO SUNSET CITY AND WINTERBURG.

THEY'RE HEADING TO THE FORMER.

CAN YOU MAKE IT TO THE LATTER SOON?

OH, I THINK I CAN MANAGE THAT.

PERFECT! I CAN KICK BACK AND RELAX WITH PLENTY OF TIME TO REST UP BEFORE STOMPING SOME GOONS!

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY PRISCILLA TRAMONTANO

THANK YOU FOR ALL RESPONDING SO QUICKLY. ALLOW ME TO BRING EVERYONE UP TO SPEED.

THE CHAOTIX HAVE ASSEMBLED IN SUNSET CITY.

HI, JEWEL!

LINE 2

LINE 3

LINE 4

TAILS JOINS US FROM HIS WORKSHOP IN CENTRAL CITY.

AND SONIC IS IN WINTERBURG, WHICH HE REACHED IN RECORD TIME.

IT'S WHAT I DO.

VECTOR, IF YOU'D KINDLY BRIEF US?

JEWEL! HI! CAN YOU SEE ME?!

SO THE DEADLY SIX HAVE BEEN ATTACKING TOWNS.*

WE FIGURED OUT THEY'RE ALL PLACES THEY TRIED TO CONTROL DURING THE METAL VIRUS OUTBREAK.**

*LAST ISSUE!--EDS.
**STH#25-28

YES, CHARMY. HELLO.

HAVING DEDUCED THEIR PATTERN OF ATTACKS, I SET UP AN AMBUSH FOR THEM!

WE'LL BE WAITING FOR THEM HERE...

...WHILE SONIC IS WAITING AT THE OTHER TARGETED TOWN.

CHILLING OUT WITH THE PROMISE OF ADVENTURE? LIFE DOESN'T GET BETTER THAN THAT.

MEANWHILE, TAILS IS IN CENTRAL CITY BECAUSE IT'S... WELL... CENTRAL.

TAKE IT AWAY, LITTLE BUDDY.

WHOOPS! THAT'S MY CUE!

I KNEW WE'D HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE DEADLY SIX EVENTUALLY, SO I'VE BEEN WORKSHOPPING SOME OPTIONS.

I PRESENT TO YOU--THE *ZETI ZAPPER!*

I BUILT THEM BY REVERSE-ENGINEERING ZAVOK'S CHAOS EMERALD SIPHON.

THEY'LL TURN THEIR OWN ELECTRO-MAGNETIC POWERS AGAINST THEM, HARMLESSLY DISABLING THEM FOR CAPTURE AND TRANSPORT...

...ABOARD THE ZETI LAUNCHER!

IT WILL AUTOMATICALLY RETURN THEM TO LOST HEX WHERE THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO BOTHER ANYONE!

WHAT IF THEY REMOVE THE ZAPPERS MID-FLIGHT? COULDN'T THEY TAKE CONTROL OF THE ROCKET?

I'VE BUILT SAFE-GUARDS AGAINST ALL THAT. THE HARDEST PART WILL BE TAKING THEM DOWN.

YOU CAN TRUST IN TAILS'S TECH, JEWEL.

ALL RIGHT. I'LL KEEP EVERYONE UPDATED HOURLY.

RELAX, JEWEL. IT'LL BE FINE.

THE RESTORATION HAS WORKED SO HARD TO REBUILD.

I THINK EVERYONE WANTS TO FORGET THE METAL VIRUS WAS EVEN A THING. LIKE WE ALL WOKE UP FROM A BAD DREAM...

I'LL MAKE SURE OF THAT. I JUST FINISHED SAVING THIS TOWN FROM EGGMAN. I'M NOT ABOUT TO LET THOSE JERKS TEAR IT DOWN.

...BUT THAT'S HARD TO DO WITH ZAVOK'S CREW CAUSING HAVOC AND EGGMAN UP TO HIS USUAL MESS.*

ALL I NEED NOW IS FOR THE BABYLON ROGUES TO SHOW UP. OR WORSE...

*STH#37-40--EDS.

"...THAT EGGMAN GIGA-FANBOY, STARLINE."

EMERALDVILLE RUINS.

I CONSIDER PATIENCE ONE OF MY VIRTUES, BUT EVEN I HAVE MY LIMITS. I HAVE WORK TO DO!

WHILE THE ENCOUNTER WAS BRIEF AND... DISARMING... I COULDN'T HELP BUT TAKE NOTE OF THE BADNIK AMONG SONIC'S FRIENDS.*

*STH #36 -EDS.

THE CONSTRUCTION WAS UNORTHODOX BUT UNDENIABLY EGGMAN QUALITY. PERHAPS BUILT DURING HIS "TINKER" PERIOD?

SUCH A UNIQUE CREATION, UNLIKE ANYTHING ELSE OF HIS! ALL OF THE INSIGHTS AND NUANCES I COULD OBTAIN BY STUDYING THEM...!

...IF I COULD ONLY ACQUIRE THEM. WHICH I CAN'T. BECAUSE THEY'RE STASHED IN RESTORATION HQ. WHICH I CAN'T ACCESS EITHER.

MY TRICORE WOULD BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO STORM THE FACILITY, BUT THAT'S DR. EGGMAN'S STYLE. NOT MINE. I'M TRYING TO BE BETTER.

AND MY HYPNOTIC TOOLS ONLY GOT ME INTO THE PRISON BECAUSE I WASN'T KNOWN TO SECURITY.*

I SHOULD ASSUME I'D BE IDENTIFIED ON SIGHT HERE.

*STH "BAD GUYS" #1--EDS.

NO, I NEED TO MINIMIZE MY CONTACTS. I'VE SEEN PEOPLE ENTER THIS SHED, BUT NEVER LEAVE. PERHAPS THERE'S A TRAP DOOR OR...

EUREKA! BUT THERE'S NO TIME TO CELEBRATE. I MUST BE EXCEEDINGLY CAUTIOUS.

I DIDN'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF ESTABLISHING ANY KIND OF DISTRACTION...

RESTORATION HQ. MAIN ENTRANCE.

?

YAAAAAAAWN

BEEE

THIS IS WHAT THEY BUILT FOR THEMSELVES?

WHERE DO WE START? GIMME A TARGET! ANY TARGET!

TEAR IT DOWN.

TEAR IT ALL DOWN.

WOO-HOO-HOO-YEAH!

GIMME ALL THE TOPPINGS! ALL THE FLAVORS!

WHAT ARE THOSE?!

SHH! THEY WON'T FIND US HERE!

PREPARE FOR BATTLE! THEIR DEFENSES HAVE ARRIVED!

BWOOSH

BWOOSH

BWOOSH

CRACK

CRACK

EVERYONE! TO ME!

WE WILL FIGHT THEIR SOLDIERS AS ONE!

WHERE ARE THE REST? ARE THEY LYING IN WAIT?

HEH-HEH! NO, I THINK THAT'S ALL THERE IS.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

THE PEOPLE OF THIS WORLD CHERISH PEACE. THEY LIVE IN COMPLACENT HARMONY, ONLY DISTURBED BY EGGMAN'S OCCASIONAL FIT OF MADNESS. ON THOSE OCCASIONS, THEY RELY ON THEIR HEROES.

OTHERWISE, THEY SEE NO NEED TO PREPARE FOR VIOLENCE.

THEN... WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMEONE TAKES THEIR STUFF? OR PICKS A FIGHT, OR WHATEVER?

THEY SIMPLY DON'T. THEY ARE KIND AND COMPASSIONATE TO EACH OTHER.

GROSS. THAT'S GROSS. I HATE HOW GROSS THAT IS.

THEN WE MARCH STRAIGHT TO THE HEART OF THEIR OPERATIONS...

...AND RIP IT OUT.

ZAVOK IS ALIVE?! AND HERE?! NOW?!

NO, NO... SERENITY NOW... FEAR IS THE MIND-KILLER...

THIS... COULD BE A BOON, ACTUALLY. WHILE THOSE MONSTERS TERRORIZE EVERYONE ELSE, I CAN MOVE ABOUT MORE FREELY.

ELEVATOR

IT WOULDN'T DO TO GET CAUGHT BY ANYONE, THOUGH. I MUST BE SWIFT AND ATTENTIVE...

"...AND HOPE MY ENEMIES KEEP EACH OTHER OCCUPIED."

DOORS SEALED. IN POSITION.

HOPE EVERYONE ELSE IS OKAY.

WE'LL COVER YOU AS LONG AS WE CAN!

RESTORATION HQ TO THE CHAOTIX, TAILS, SONIC-- ANYONE!

THE DEADLY SIX ARE HERE!

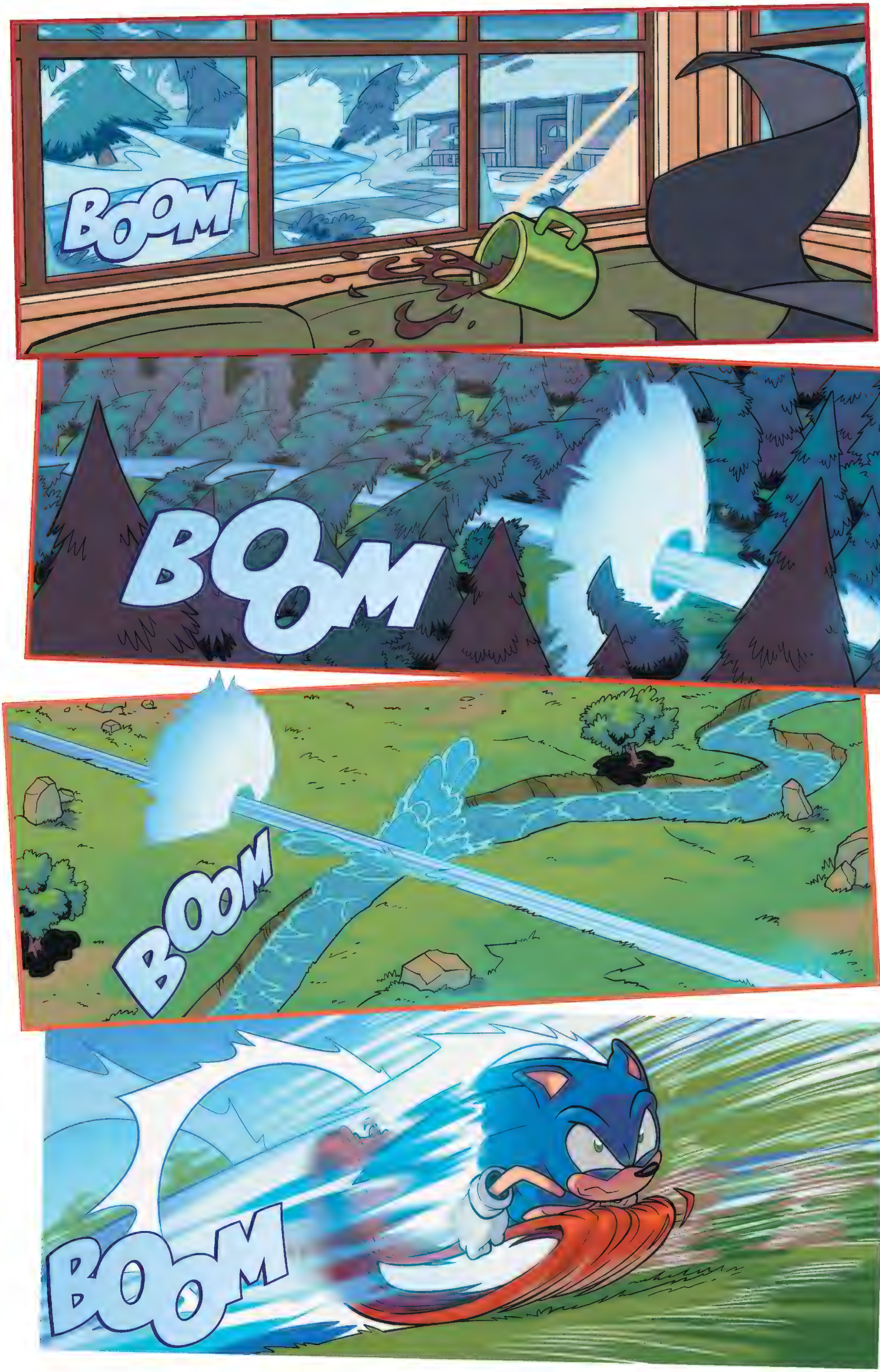
B-BUT WE FOLLOWED THE CLUES!

NO, WE WERE BAITED LIKE A BUNCHA CHUMPS! WE'RE ON OUR WAY!

I'M SCRAMBLING WITH THE ZETI ZAPPERS NOW! I'LL LIKELY GET THERE FIRST!

SONIC, I'LL WAIT AND WE'LL GO IN TOGETHER!

SONIC?


BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM

GRRR... NO CONTROL ROOM AND NO FOOD! THIS PLACE SUCKS!

THEN YOU WANT TO LEAVE AND TELL THE OTHERS THIS ROOM CAN BE IGNORED.

YEAH... OK...

THAT'S NEVER WORKED SO WELL...

FAR OUT, MAN! YOU TOTALLY SAVED THE DAY!

DON'T! THAT'S DR. STARLINE! HE'S A BAD GUY!

BUT... HE SAVED US...?

I CAN MULTI-TASK. HAND OVER THE PUPPET, PLEASE.

NOT A CHANCE. WE LOOK AFTER OUR OWN. EVEN WHEN THEY DUMP A WHOLE OIL PAN IN YOUR FACE.

I SAID I WAS SORRY.

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?!

AH! SO YOU'RE SELF-ACTUALIZING! MARVELOUS! DO YOU GO BY A MODEL NUMBER?

I'M... BELLE. "NICE" TO MEET YOU?

HAHA! SPLENDID!

WHILE I DID GET A USEFUL SAMPLE FROM THE FRACAS AT THE CHATEAU, YOU LEFT QUITE THE IMPRESSION ON ME.

PHYSICALLY AND METAPHORICALLY.

I BELIEVE YOU'D BE PIVOTAL TO COMPLETING MY CURRENT PROJECTS. I'M SURE YOU'RE AWARE HOW MUCH I TREASURE DR. EGGMAN'S WORKS. YOU KNOW I WILL HANDLE YOU WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT.

SHE AIN'T EGG-TECH, DOC. NOW, QUIT HARSHIN' OUR VIBE...

...AND GET--

OW!

I'VE GIVEN HIM A DOSE OF TOXIN. A SECOND ROUND WILL BE THE END OF HIM.

IF WE LEAVE *RIGHT NOW*, I'D BE TOO BUSY TO FINISH HIM OFF.

D-DON'T HURT HIM! I'LL COME QUIETLY!

I'M SORRY!

THIS WAY, MISS BELLE.

ELEVATOR

ELEVATOR

WHY IS THE BLASTED ELEVATOR OUT OF SERVICE?

I GUESS THE MONSTERS CUT A POWER LINE. OH, WELL! I'LL LEAVE YOU TO YOUR ESCAPE. HAVE A NICE DAY!

GYEEP!

HNAM
I MADE A LITTLE GAP.
IT'S THE MOST RESISTANCE WE'VE MET THUS FAR.
SCREEEEECH
SUCH A CURIOUS TOMB. THE LIVING ARE INSIDE. LET'S FIX THAT.

HEYA, JERKS! AM I LATE FOR THE PARTY?

NO PARTY, HEDGEHOG. BUT YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR YOUR FUNERAL.

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY THOMAS ROTHLISBERGER COLORS BY VALENTINA PINTO

RESTORATION HQ, EMERALDVILLE.

DESTROY HIM!

PFFT! YOU CAN TRY!

SLAM

COULDN'T LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE, COULD YOU?

A WHOLE WORLD TO EXPLORE AND ENJOY, AND YOU JUST *HAD* TO PICK A FIGHT.

STOMP

HANG ON! WE'LL BACK YOU UP!
:HRNG:
:GRPF:
:MMPH:
NOT YET!
WE NEED TAILS'S DOO-DADS!
I'LL KEEP THEM BUSY UNTIL--

TAILS! VECTOR! YOU NEED TO HURRY!

NOBODY ELSE IS EVEN REMOTELY CLOSE TO HELP!

I'M EN ROUTE! NOT MUCH LONGER!

I'M FLYING IN TO GET THERE FASTER!

THE CHAOTIX ARE ON OUR WAY!

MAYBE EVEN FASTER IF I GOT OUT AND PUSHED!

HE'S ON HIS OWN FOR NOW.

NO.

TANGLE. BRACE, PLEASE.

LIKE THIS?

YES. THANK YOU. HOLD STILL.

SKYOW

YOW!

THANKS, WHISPER!

CRACK

CLUD

SKYOW

SKYOW

SKYOW

SKYOW

GIVE ME THAT!

POW

YEAH! THAT'S THE STUFF! GIMME ANOTHER!

POW

GET IN THERE AND *FIGHT!*

I'M LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT TIME TO STRIKE.

THEN GET UP...

...AND STRIKE!

CRASH

THANKS AGAIN!

YEAH... YEAH! NOW I'M PUMPED!

YOU UNLEASHED THE BEAST, BABY! I'M GONNA TEAR THIS WHOLE PLACE DOWN!

YAH-HA-HA-HA-HA

I'VE HAD QUITE ENOUGH OF THAT!

SKYOW

AHH!

THAT'S IT, JERK! PREPARE FOR A--!

SLAM

SLAM SLAM SLAM

YEAH... YOU AND ME... GONNA TEAR... TEAR IT UP...

DUDE! STOP! YOU'RE DONE!

NOT DONE TILL I'M *DEAD!*

SLAM

NAH. YOU'RE DONE.

POW

I ADMIRE YOUR TENACITY.

FOR WHAT IS PERSEVERANCE, IF NOT A LESSER FORM OF RUTHLESSNESS?

WHUMP

YOU ARE INDEED A MIGHTY WARRIOR. THE MOST CHALLENGING FOE WE'VE EVER FACED.

BUT CHALLENGES ARE MEANT TO BE OVERCOME.

YOU'RE BITTER YOUR POETRY CIRCLE DIDN'T LIKE YOUR STUFF. I GET IT.

CAN WE JUMP TO THE PART WHERE YOU ACTUALLY DO SOMETHING?

GOTCHA!

CRUNCH

HOLD HIM! I WANT ALL OF THE RESTORATION TO LISTEN AS I PEEL HIM INTO PIECES!

BETTER... THAN... LISTENING... TO... YOU... RAMBLE...

I SAID HOLD HIM!

HURRY! TAG 'EM!

PERFECT TIMING!

NO!!!

WHAM

YOU'RE OUT OF TRICKS, BOY. NOW WHAT?

I USE THE SKILLS SONIC TAUGHT ME, THAT'S WHAT!

POW

WHAM

POW

AND NOW YOUR SKILLS HAVE FAILED YOU.

GUESS I'LL JUST GO BACK TO TRICKS THEN!

GAAAAAAA...AAAAAAAAAAAHHH...

LAST ONE!

NGARGH!

O EXQUISITE AGONY... I STRUGGLE AGAINST THE PAIN... ONLY TO BE CONSUMED BY BEAUTIFUL DARKNESS...

YOU GOOD?

YEAH, ARE YOU OKAY?

WHUMP

THEY'RE CALLED THE "DEADLY SIX." THEY DON'T TICKLE.

ARE YOU OKAY?

NOTHING A CHILI DOG WON'T FIX.

YAY! SO--WE'VE GOT A *BIG* PROBLEM!

NAH, TAILS SHOWED UP AND SAVED THE DAY. THE DEADLY SIX ARE DOWN. WE'RE GOOD.

NO! NOT THAT!

THE DOORS ARE IN BAD SHAPE, BUT THE TRACKS ARE INTACT. I CAN GET THEM OPEN, NO PROBLEM.

FORGET THE DOORS!

UGH. NOW WHAT?

BELLE'S BEEN KIDNAPPED!

DR. STARLINE KIDNAPPED BELLE!

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

EMERALDVILLE RUINS.

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO OVER-POWER TAILS'S TECH.

ON THAT NOTE...

...YOUR RIDE IS HERE.

RAA-- ARGH!

KZZZT

:SIGH:

SO... WHAT IS TO BECOME OF US?

WE'RE SENDING YOU HOME.

...WHAT?

MY ZETI LAUNCHER WILL CARRY YOU ALL BACK TO LOST HEX. ONCE THERE, ITS SYSTEMS WILL SELF-DESTRUCT AND YOUR ZETI ZAPPERS WILL DEACTIVATE.

YOU'LL BE STRANDED ON YOUR HOME WORLD, AND THE REST OF US WILL BE SAFE FROM YOU.

DON'T LET THE DOOR HIT YOU ON THE WAY OUT. OR DO. I *REALLY* DON'T CARE.

LAUNCH SEQUENCE READY

AFTER ALL WE'VE DONE... YOU'RE SHOWING US MERCY?

EH, WE'VE ALREADY WON. THAT'S ENOUGH.

Y'KNOW, ASIDE FROM IT BEING *REALLY* HUMBLING FOR YOU GUYS.

HA HA HA

BUT I'M NOT GOING TO SACRIFICE *MY* PRINCIPLES OUT OF *FEAR*.

YOU WANT TO CAUSE MORE TROUBLE? *FINE*. WASTE YOUR TIME. I'LL KICK YOUR BUTT *EVERY* TIME.

HEH. I CAN RESPECT THAT.

BWOOSH

THE ZETI LAUNCHER IS EN ROUTE TO LOST HEX, JEWEL. ANY WORD FROM THE CHAOTIX?

THEY MISSED THEIR LAST CHECK-IN. I DON'T KNOW IF IT MEANS THEY'RE BUSY OR IF SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAS HAPPENED, OR...!

THEY MAY NOT SEEM ALL THAT PROFESSIONAL, BUT THEY GET RESULTS.

DON'T WORRY, JEWEL. IF ANYONE CAN FIND BELLE, IT'S THEM.

THAT SAID, IT WOULDN'T HURT FOR ME TO LOOK, TOO.

BE CAREFUL OUT THERE, SONIC.

THE DEADLY SIX CRISIS MAY BE RESOLVED, BUT WE KNOW DR. EGGMAN IS UP TO HIS OLD TRICKS*...

*STH#36-40.

"...AND THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT *DR. STARLINE* IS PLANNING."

I-I'M BELLE. NICE TO MEET YOU...?

W-WHERE AM I?! *WHAT'S GOING ON?!*

FINALLY! YOU HAVE THE MOST OBTUSE START-UP ROUTINE.

THEN AGAIN, YOUR UNORTHODOX DESIGN IS *PRECISELY* WHY I SOUGHT YOU OUT!

I-I-I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

I'M NOTHING SPECIAL! I JUST REPAIR STUFF! AND MESS THINGS UP! NOT ALWAYS IN THAT ORDER!

THERE'S MORE TO YOU THAN MEETS THE EYE. WE *BOTH* KNOW THAT.

PLEASE DON'T DISASSEMBLE ME...

PERISH THE THOUGHT! YOU ARE A UNIQUE, INCREDIBLY COMPLEX PIECE OF ART! I WOULDN'T *DARE* RISK DAMAGING YOU!

WE MAY HAVE HAD A FALLING OUT, BUT I STILL HOLD DR. EGGMAN'S WORK IN HIGH ESTEEM.

I WASN'T BUILT BY EGGMAN!

THAT'S TRUE... TO AN EXTENT. I SUSPECT YOU DON'T KNOW THE FULL STORY.

TH-THERE'S NO STORY TO IT.

TUT-TUT, LITTLE PUPPET. LIES WILL MAKE YOUR NOSE GROW.

DR. EGGMAN LOST HIS MEMORIES AFTER ONE OF HIS MOST CRITICAL DEFEATS.

HE TOOK ON THE PERSONA OF *MR. TINKER*, A KINDLY INVENTOR AND REPAIR MAN.

SO I TOOK HIM IN AND WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO CURE HIM OF THAT STATE OF MIND.

WITH... SOME ASSISTANCE FROM METAL SONIC...

...YOU TURNED HIM INTO EGGMAN...

INDEED! THE ONLY DRAWBACK BEING THE LOSS OF "MR. TINKER'S" ALTERNATE DESIGN PERSPECTIVE.

DR. EGGMAN HAS A CERTAIN STYLE TO HIS CREATIONS. SOMETIMES MINIMALIST, SOMETIMES ECLECTIC, BUT ALWAYS WITH A CENTRAL MOTIF.

HE WOULD NEVER THINK OF DEVELOPING A PUPPET LIKE YOU. NOR WILL HE EVER DO SO AGAIN.

WHICH IS WHY I NEED TO STUDY YOUR UNIQUE--

YOU TOOK MY FATHER AWAY FROM ME!

PINGPING PING

ALERT

YES! SUCH PASSION! SUCH REALISTIC EMOTIONAL SIMULATION!

DON'T YOU EVEN CARE?! ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?!

OH, I DO AND I AM!

LET LOOSE, BELLE! TELL ME EVERYTHING!

YOU INSENSITIVE JERK! YOU RUINED EVERYTHING!

LESS ABOUT ME, MORE ABOUT *YOU*. DR. EGGMAN MADE YOU WHILE IN WINDMILL VILLAGE, DIDN'T HE?

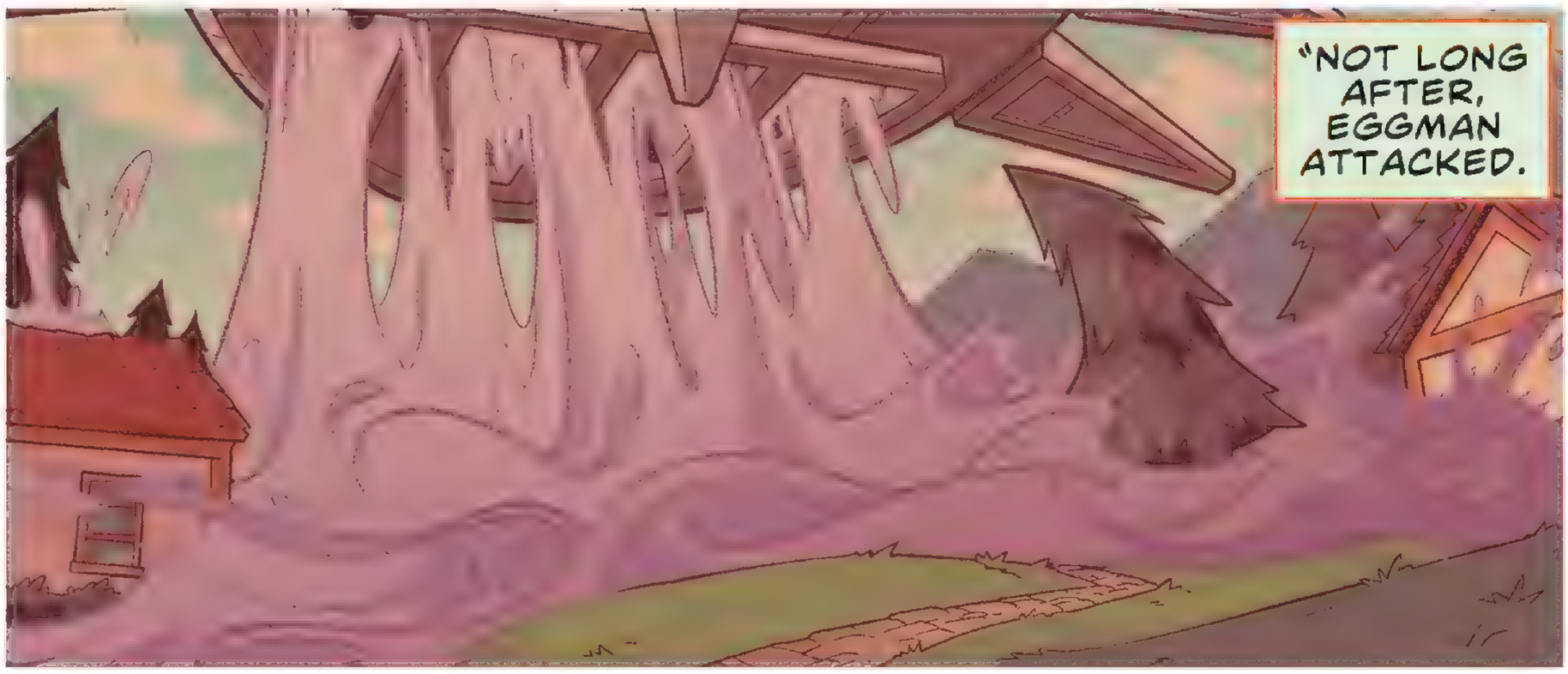
HE WAS MISTER! TINKER!

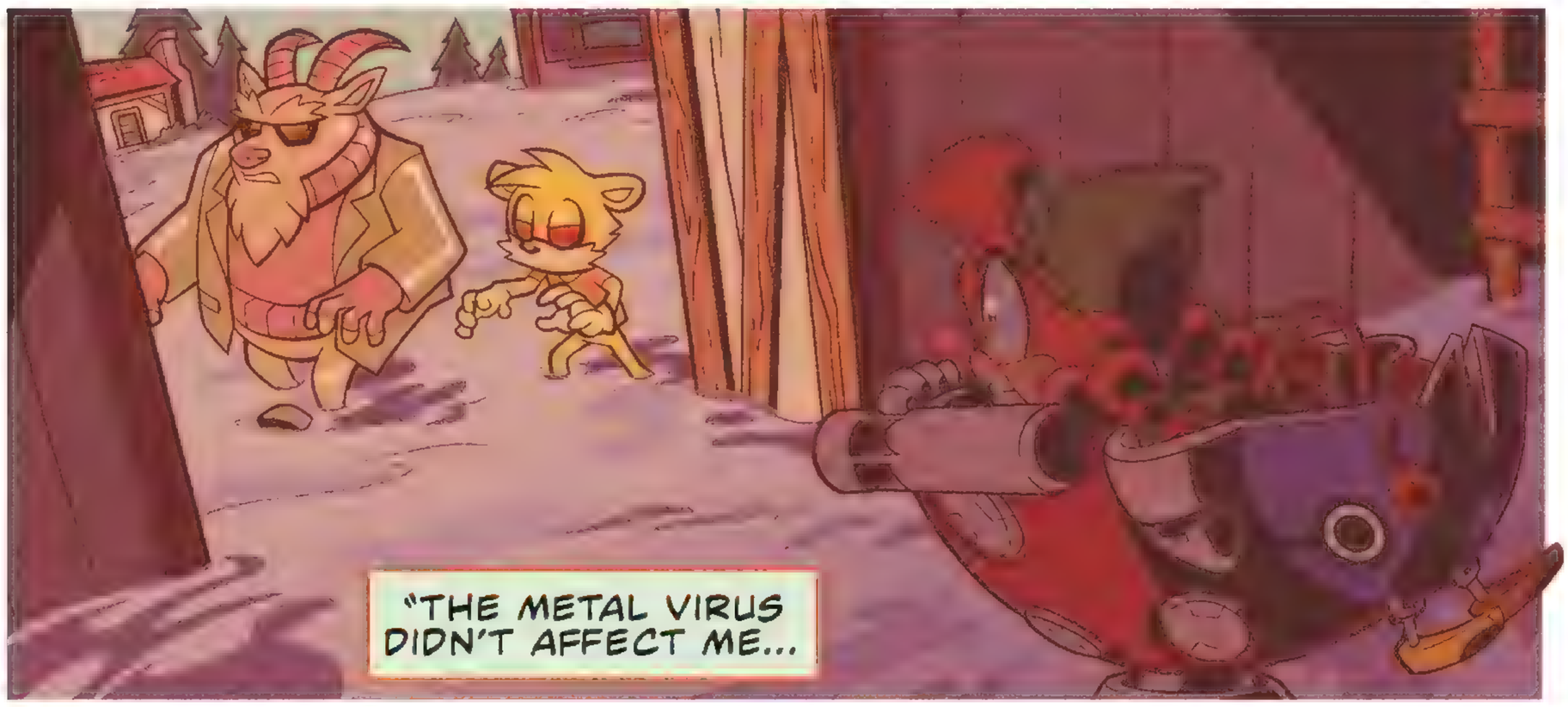
HE WAS KIND! AND SWEET! AND FUNNY! AND... I LOVED HIM SO MUCH...

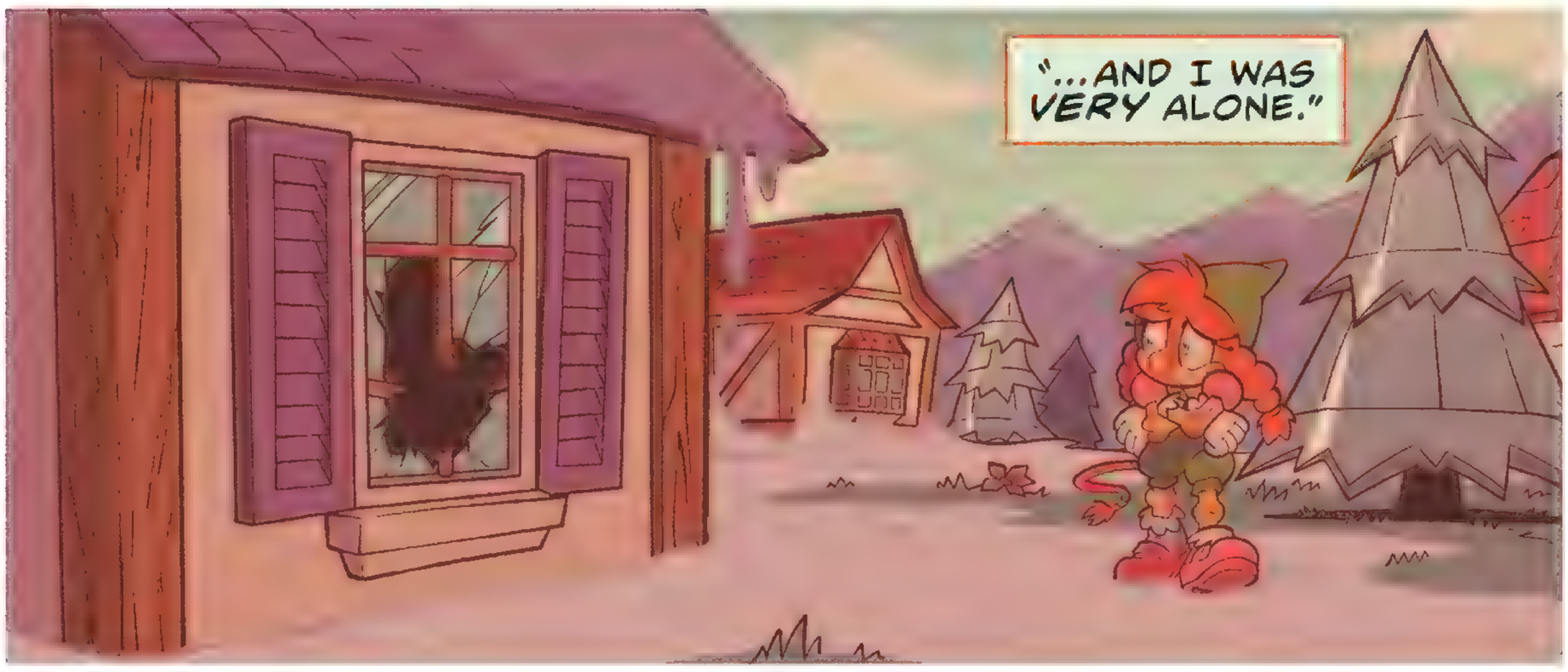
...I WAS SO HAPPY FIXING THE TOYS AND RIDES HE MADE FOR THE CHILDREN.

HE BEGAN TO INTRODUCE ME TO THE VILLAGERS. THEY WERE NERVOUS AROUND ME, BUT WILLING TO GIVE ME A CHANCE.

"THEN ONE DAY... HE VANISHED.


"NOT LONG AFTER, EGGMAN ATTACKED.


"THE METAL VIRUS DIDN'T AFFECT ME...


"...AND I WAS VERY ALONE."

"EVENTUALLY EVERYONE WAS CURED AND CAME HOME...

"...BUT THEY BLAMED ME. THEY THOUGHT I WAS AN EGGMAN SPY.

"THEY BROKE DOWN AND RECYCLED EVERYTHING MR. TINKER BUILT...

"...AND GOT MAD IF I TRIED TO FIX ANYTHING.

"SO I RAN AWAY. I LOOKED FOR... *HIM*.

"I THOUGHT... MAYBE IF I FOUND HIM, I COULD TALK TO HIM. MAKE HIM COME BACK... AS MR. TINKER.

"INSTEAD, I WAS FOUND BY SONIC AND TAILS."

I THOUGHT... MAYBE... WITH THEIR HELP... I COULD *FIX* THINGS...

STUPENDOUS.

QUANTIFIABLE METRICS ON LOYALTY, FAMILIAL DEVOTION, AND THE WHOLE GAMUT OF EMOTIONS!

A SENSE OF PURPOSE AND BELONGING RENDERED IN BEAUTIFUL, REPLICABLE CODE.

AND ALL OF IT READILY APPLICABLE! THIS WILL SAVE ME MONTHS OF RESEARCH!

I CAN DIRECTLY APPLY IT TO *THEM* AND BEGIN FIELD TESTING IMMEDIATELY!

WHY DID I EVEN BOTHER? YOU DON'T CARE. NOBODY CARES...

CLICK

KEEP QUIET. WE'LL ESCAPE WHILE HE'S DISTRACTED.

AND ON TOP OF IT ALL, THERE'S GHOSTS?!

?

WAITAMINUTE... YOU'RE THAT DETECTIVE-NINJA GUY...

...THAT CAN TURN INVISIBLE...

...AW, SAWDUST.

OH, FOR PITY'S SAKE...

...GIVE IT UP, DOC! THE CHAOTIX HAVE YOU SURROUNDED!

GRACIOUS. HOW DID YOU FIND ME SO QUICKLY?

CLAP CLAP

ALL PART OF BEING A GOOD DETECTIVE.

YEAH! AND NOW WE KNOW WHERE YOUR EVIL LAIR IS!

HAHAHA! MY DEAR CHILD, YOU THINK *THIS* MODEST FACILITY IS MY HEADQUARTERS?

WELL... I *DID*... UNTIL YOU LAUGHED LIKE THAT JUST NOW...

DOESN'T MATTER. WE'RE BRINGING YOU IN AND RAIDING YOUR FILES. WE'LL KNOW WHAT YOU'VE BEEN UP TO SOON ENOUGH!

ALL THE DATA HAS BEEN UPLOADED TO MY PERSONAL CLOUD SERVER ALREADY. THERE'S NOTHING HERE FOR YOU TO INSPECT.

BUT JUST TO BE SURE...

SMASH

GET HIM!

SHOULD I...?

FIND COVER!

BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME, DETECTIVES. AND MISS BELLE? *THANK YOU.*

YOU'VE BEEN *VERY* HELPFUL.

ARGH! HE'S TOO FAST!

ARE YOU OKAY? DID HE HURT YOU?

HE BROKE MY HEART.

NO...

LIKE... LITERALLY? 'CAUSE TAILS CAN MAYBE FIX THAT.

SHH... IT'S GONNA BE OKAY NOW.

I'M HERE. AND YOU'VE GOT FRIENDS WAITING FOR YOU.

MEANWHILE-- LOST HEX.

FWOOOOSH

CLUNK

THEY WERE TRUE TO THEIR WORD.

ONE OF A HERO'S MANY WEAKNESSES.

BEEP

WELL... HERE WE ARE. BACK HOME WITH NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT.

MAN... I DON'T EVEN FEEL LIKE BREAKING ANYTHING...

CONSIDER, MY PACK, THAT WE TOOK ON A CONQUEST FAR GREATER THAN ANY ZETI EVER DARED UNDERTAKE.

THERE IS HONOR AND GLORY TO BE FOUND IN THAT, THOUGH OUR VICTORY WAS STOLEN BY THESE RODENTS BY A HAIRSBREADTH.

BUT IN DEFEAT, THERE IS KNOWLEDGE.

THESE PALTRY TRICKS CANNOT DEFEAT US AGAIN. LOST HEX WILL NOT CONTAIN US FOREVER.

WE WILL RETURN TO THE WORLD BELOW WITH A *VENGEANCE*. WISER. STRONGER.

AND EVEN MORE *RUTHLESS* THAN BEFORE.

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

HEY, AMY! WHERE DO YOU WANT THIS STUFF?

GOSH, THAT'S A LOT MORE THAN--

IN THE TRUNK IS FINE!

THANKS FOR LETTING ME BORROW YOUR CAMPING GEAR, TAILS, YOU'RE A LIFESAVER! IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO TO RETURN THE FAVOR--

THERE MOST DEFINITELY IS! I NEED ***DETAILED*** REVIEWS OF THE EQUIPMENT. THERE'S NO WAY I CAN IMPROVE MY PROTOTYPES WITHOUT FEEDBACK!

PROTOTYPES?

GEE, AMY. I THOUGHT YOU WERE A HEDGEHOG, NOT A GUINEA PIG.

AMY-01

HUSH, YOU! I'M SURE IT'LL BE FINE.

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE GIRLS AND I ARE HANGING OUT THAT DOESN'T INVOLVE SOME SORT OF BATTLE OR WILD SCHEME, AND I'M TAKING FULL ADVANTAGE!

IT DOES SOUND NICE... YOU CAN'T BEAT THE WILDFLOWERS IN THE ZONE PARK THIS TIME OF YEAR. MAYBE I SHOULD TAG ALONG...

SONIC, YOU PROMISED YOU'D PLAY THE NEW GAME FROM ***AGES*** WITH ME THIS WEEKEND!

I NEED A PLAYER TWO FOR VERSUS MODE!

HE'S RIGHT, GUESS I'M BOOKED.

HAVE FUN, YOU TWO!

ONE PICKUP LATER...

CAMPING! BRAVING THE WILDERNESS WITH NOTHING BUT OUR WITS AND GUTS. THIS IS GONNA BE AWESOME!

BELLE, WE CAN MAKE SOME MORE ROOM FOR YOU BACK THERE...

OH, NO! I-I'M OKAY!

SHOULD I HAVE BROUGHT A KNIFE?

I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT A KNIFE.

IT'S MORE OF A NATURE HIKES AND MARSHMALLOW ROASTS SORT OF CAMPING TRIP, TANGLE.

I KNOW... BUT IT'S STILL AN ADVENTURE!

OUT SEEING THE WORLD...

A FEW DAYS AGO...

SCREECH

TMP-TMP-TMP

...

IT'S FOR THE BEST.

MORNING! I'M JOGGIN'. OOH, DO YOU WANNA JOG WITH ME?

GYAH!

SOMETHING UP?

NOTHING. IT'S FINE. I...

...I'VE STAYED HERE TOO LONG.

WITH THE RESTORATION? YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY--

MIMIC IS FREE.

MY PRESENCE IS A LIABILITY. I WON'T PUT ANYONE ELSE IN DANGER.

BUT YOU JUST GOT HERE...

YOUR PLACE IS WITH THE RESTORATION. MINE ISN'T.

"TANGLE?"

HMM?

YOU GOT QUIET ALL OF A SUDDEN.

SORRY, JUST ZONED OUT. THINKING ABOUT RESTORATION STUFF.

I KNOW THE FEELING...

IT'S HARD TO TEAR YOURSELF AWAY FROM SUCH IMPORTANT WORK.

SURE... IMPORTANT.

THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE TO REST AND RECHARGE! WE'VE EARNED A GIRLS' NIGHT OUT, AND I'M NOT TAKING NO FOR AN ANSWER.

I'VE DONE MY RESEARCH. THIS IS THE BEST CAMPGROUND AROUND...

"...AND THAT'S AN AMY ROSE GUARANTEE!"

IT LOOKS AWFULLY BUSY.

THAT'S JUST PROOF THAT IT'S AN A+ CAMPGROUND!

FOREST RIDGE ZONE CAMPGROUND

MORE CAMPERS?

WE'VE GOT A RESERVATION FOR SITE #97?

GOOD FOR YOU. LISTEN, WE'VE GOT SOME NEW FIRE REGULATIONS IN PLACE THIS YEAR.

THE *METAL VIRUS* INFECTED THIS ENTIRE REGION THROUGH THE WINTER AND METAL PLANTS DON'T ABSORB *WATER*, SEE? SINCE THE AREA MISSED ITS HYDRATION LAST SEASON, WHOLE PARK IS BONE-DRY AND SET TO GO UP.

FIRE IS ALLOWED *ONLY* IN MARKED AREAS, AND BE SURE TO FULLY DOUSE THE COALS BEFORE LEAVING THE CAMPSITE. AND NO BURNING TRASH, TAKE IT OVER HERE--

ASHE!

I *TOLD* YOU, IF YOU CAME TO WORK WITH ME, *NO FIRE!*

AMY-01

EEE HEE HEE!

HALF OF THIS IS GEOMETRY EQUATIONS... WHO *WROTE* THIS?

=SIGH=

TRY THREADING THAT POLE IN--*OOF!*

WUZZAT?

WHAP

OOH...! IT'S JUST LIKE TAILS TO PACK ALL THESE HIGH-TECH BELLS AND WHISTLES, BUT FORGET THE *ESSENTIALS.*

I CAN TAKE CARE OF THAT... SEE?

IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'D RATHER NOT.

IT COMES IN HANDY, BUT IT'S STILL A LITTLE NERVE-WRACKING WHEN YOU'RE MADE OF *WOOD.*

SOMETHING'S MISSING?

YEAH, *NO MATCHES!*

SORRY... I KNOW YOU WANT EVERYBODY TO BE HAVING A GOOD TIME.

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT! AND DON'T WORRY...

AMY-01

"...I'VE GOT A TRICK UP MY SLEEVE!"

SO... HOW'D PITCHING THE TENT GO?

...

TANGLE? THE FIRE, IT'S...

WHUH-- OH!

ARE YOU FEELING ALL RIGHT? YOU'VE BEEN DISTRACTED ALL DAY.

I CAN HANDLE IT, JEWEL! I'VE JUST GOT SOME STUFF TO THINK ABOUT.

I DIDN'T MEAN TO--

ALL RIGHT! WHAT DO YOU SAY WE GET THIS NIGHT STARTED?

UMM... HOW?

WITH THESE!

WHOA!

ARE THOSE FORTUNE CARDS?

YEP! AND I'M AN *EXPERT* PRACTITIONER, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF. THESE CARDS LED ME TO SOMEONE *VERY* IMPORTANT TO ME!

ACHOO

THROUGH THESE CARDS...

...I CAN UNCOVER THE SECRETS OF YOUR *DESTINY!*

YOU CAN REALLY PREDICT THE *FUTURE?*

IT'S MORE ABOUT *SUGGESTION.* PRESENT SOMEONE WITH AN OPEN-ENDED "PREDICTION," AND THEY'LL ASSOCIATE IT WITH THEIR OWN LIFE EXPERIENCES.

AH! YOU DOUBT MY POWER?

MAYBE A *DEMONSTRATION* WILL CHANGE YOUR MIND!

TA-DA! THE MASTER: THIS CARD SIGNIFIES *STRENGTH* AND *LEADERSHIP*-- A UNIFIER OF CHAOS.

The Master

QUITE FITTING. WOULDN'T YOU AGREE, *MS. DIRECTOR?*

I SUPPOSE...

OKAY, WHO WANTS TO GO NEXT?

UH--

WHAT IF IT TURNS OUT TO BE A FUTURE WE MAYBE DON'T LIKE?

YOU WON'T *KNOW* UNTIL YOU TRY... THAT'S PART OF THE FUN OF IT!

HUH! NOW THAT'S INTERESTING.

WHAT'S IT SAY?

THIS CARD IS THE CHAO'S FRUIT.

Chao's Fruit

THIS ONE'S ALL ABOUT THE BALANCE OF OPPOSING SIDES, SO IT CAN MEAN MANY THINGS! A SHOWDOWN, A MORAL DILEMMA, MAYBE A PARTNERSHIP...

...DOES ANY OF THAT SOUND FAMILIAR TO YOU?

HMM... I DON'T THINK SO.

OTHER THAN THE ODD ZETI ATTACK, WE DON'T GET A WHOLE LOT OF *EXCITEMENT* AROUND RESTORATION HQ.

DO YOU... DO YOU THINK THE CARDS WORK ON ROBOTS?

OF COURSE!

AS LONG AS YOU'RE OPEN, THE CARDS WON'T STEER YOU--

!

WHAT? IS THERE SOMETHING ABOUT MY DAD?

YEEK!

AH, HA HA! IT'S FINE, I--

FLOOM

KRACKLE KRACKLE

I'M SORRY! I'M SORRY!

YOU'RE FINE! AND THE FORTUNE, IT WAS GOOD! YOU DREW THE *UH*, THE *STATUE SAVIOR*. IT'S ALL ABOUT *MERCY* AND *PROTECTION*.

THAT'S PERFECT FOR THE RESTORATION! ESPECIALLY WITH JEWEL IN CHARGE.

...IT'S LATE. I'M GOING TO TURN IN.

IT'S NOT *THAT* LATE! C'MON, STAY UP A BIT LONGER!

YOU KNOW I'M NOT A NIGHT OWL, TANGLE.

SIGH

ZIP

...THAT'S DIFFERENT.

KRAK

YEEK!

RUSTLE RUSTLE

C'MON, FLASHLIGHT, *FLASHLIGHT!*

CHK-CHK-CHK-CHK

SAWDUST.

KA-CHAK

PLEASE, PLEASE, *PLEASE* BE NICE...

RRRRRRRRRR...

...RRRRRRRR

GYAH!

THOK

ZZT

RRM

ZZZIP

GEEZ, THAT SMELL... WHO STARTS A BONFIRE AT SA.M.?

OH!

GET UP, QUICK!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

:SNIFF: IS THAT SMOKE?

OH MAN...

IF A FIRE COMES THROUGH HERE, THERE'LL BE NOTHING LEFT.

CRASH

AND IT'S GOING TO GET A LOT WORSE IF PEOPLE START TO PANIC.

WE CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN.

HEY, WHERE'S BELLE?

ASHE! ANSWER ME!
SHE WASN'T BEHIND YOU?
THE RANGER MUST HAVE A PLAN!
FMA-03
WHERE ARE YOU?!
SIR! IS THERE A--
MY SON--HE'S MISSING! I HAVE TO FIND HIM.
HE'S ALWAYS WANDERING OFF INTO THE WOODS...
I'LL GO FIND HIM.
ARE YOU SURE?
SURE I'M SURE--OUT THERE IS WHERE I CAN DO THE MOST GOOD.
YOU CAN TRUST TANGLE TO HANDLE IT. WITH TANGLE ON SEARCH & RESCUE, CAN YOU HELP US GET EVERYONE TO SAFETY?
...YEAH. OKAY.

GOOD LUCK!

THANKS...

"...WE'RE GONNA NEED IT."

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY JENNIFER HERNANDEZ

I'M BZT BELLE, NICE TO--

--MEET YOU.

O-OH, FIRE! THAT'S A LOT OF FIRE!

GAH!

!

VRRRRRM

AAAH!

GEARS AND STARTERS...

YOU... PUT IT OUT.

AND YOU PULLED ME OUT OF HARM'S WAY. BUT I THOUGHT I WAS THE ONLY BADNIK THAT WANTS TO HELP...

WAIT--

--MY HAND. THE LIGHTER.

I MUST HAVE...

BELLE!

THERE YOU ARE! YOU OKAY?

WATCH OUT! THE BADNIK, IT'LL--

WAIT!

I THINK THE LI'L GUY MIGHT HAVE SOME WIRES CROSSED.

HE SAVED ME FROM THE FIRE.

THAT'S A BUG I CAN GET BEHIND!

WHOA, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HAND?!

I-IT'S NOTHING! DOESN'T HURT.

IT'S NOT NOTHING. GIVE IT HERE.

TANGLE, I THINK I MIGHT HAVE--

TELL ME LATER. RIGHT NOW, WE'VE GOT A BEAR CUB TO FIND.

WHAT ARE WE WORKING WITH HERE?

NOT MUCH... THIS CAMPGROUND IS OVERCROWDED, AND THE ROAD OUT OF HERE ISN'T MEANT FOR HEAVY TRAFFIC.

WITH THE WIND PUSHING THE FIRE OUR WAY, WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THAT.

BUT KEEPING THE GATES CLOSED... THAT'S ONLY GOING TO SCARE PEOPLE.

IF THEY'RE OPENED, WE'LL HAVE A STAMPEDE ON OUR HANDS.

ANY IDEAS, JEWEL?

I-I'M NOT SURE!

WE NEED TO COORDINATE, BUT EVERYONE IS *SO ANGRY*...

IF WE COULD GET EVERYONE TOGETHER--

HEY, RANGER! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE IN *CHARGE* HERE, RIGHT?

WHAT'RE YOU TRYING TO DO, KEEPING US IN HERE?! WE'VE GOT FAMILIES--KIDS-- IN DANGER!

OPEN THE GATES!

I'VE GOT A KID OUT THERE, TOO.

OH, I'VE SEEN HIM. THE ONE WITH THE *RED WISP*, RIGHT?

A *FIERY RED* WISP?

HEY, HOLD ON--

AND WHERE IS THAT WISP NOW, *HUH?*

I DON'T KNOW, I-- MY SON IS *MISSING*--

AND YOU EXPECT US TO FOLLOW *YOUR* ORDERS?!

THIS IS MY PARK--

WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE, NOW!

PIKO

CRACK

ALL RIGHT, EVERYBODY... SETTLE DOWN AND LISTEN UP!

YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BE SCARED--OF COURSE YOU WANT TO PROTECT YOURSELVES AND YOUR FAMILIES.

BUT THE GATE IS CLOSED RIGHT NOW FOR A GOOD REASON. THE ROAD IS SO SMALL THAT IF EVERYBODY TRIES TO LEAVE AT ONCE, WE'LL ALL GET STUCK HERE!

OKAY, BUT THAT'S NOT GOING TO STOP THE FIRE. YOU GOT ANOTHER PLAN?

WELL...

...I'M MORE ABOUT LEADING THE *CHARGE*, NOT FIGURING OUT THE *LOGISTICS*.

WHAT?!

BUT I KNOW SOMEONE WHO *IS*!

AUGH!

SO, WHAT'S THE PLAN?

AMY, I CAN'T--

I'M GONNA--

YOU WANT SOME HAMMER? NO? GIVE HER A MINUTE.

WHAT'S WRONG?

WHAT GIVES ME THE RIGHT TO TELL THESE PEOPLE WHAT TO DO?

THE ONLY THINGS I'M GOOD WITH ARE *PAPERWORK* AND *ROCKS!*

I STUMBLED THROUGH THE METAL VIRUS, THEN EGGMAN ATTACKED, THEN THE ZETI... THE RESTORATION CAN'T EVEN KEEP ITS OWN PEOPLE SAFE.

AND I... I CAN'T EVEN HELP MY *BEST FRIEND.*

YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE YOU'VE BEEN DOING THIS WHOLE TIME? *YOUR BEST.*

YOU'VE MADE IT THIS FAR, AND WITH EVERY NEW CHALLENGE YOU'RE GETTING A LITTLE STRONGER.

EVEN IF YOU DON'T THINK SO YET, I'M *CERTAIN* YOU CAN HANDLE THIS.

SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA TAKE THINGS ON FAITH, Y'KNOW?

...THANK YOU, AMY.

IT'S WHAT I DO.

HELLO! THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE.

IF WE APPROACH THIS CRISIS AS A *GROUP*, WE *CAN* MAKE IT THROUGH.

"*FIRST*, ANYONE WITH A HIGH-CAPACITY VEHICLE CAN HELP GET CHILDREN AND ELDERS TO SAFETY.

"OUR NEXT PRIORITY IS PROTECTING *OURSELVES* AND THE *FOREST*. THE RANGER SHOULD HAVE EQUIPMENT FOR PARK MAINTENANCE THAT WE CAN USE.

"WE DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO PUT OUT THE FIRE, BUT WE CAN CREATE A PERIMETER TO CONTAIN ITS SPREAD.

"I CAN'T PROMISE EVERYTHING WILL GO PERFECTLY..."

"...BUT TOGETHER, WE'VE GOT A FIGHTING CHANCE!"

TANGLE, ARE YOU *SURE* YOU'RE OKAY?

=COUGH= YEAH, IT'S JUST--KAFF-- A SIDE EFFECT OF HAVING *LUNGS*.

OH, WOW--

LOOK!

LOOKS LIKE THE SMOKE MIGHT BE THINNER OVER HERE.

IT'S THE RANGER'S KID--*ASHE!*

WATCH YOUR STEP...

I'M NOT GONNA LET A LITTLE LOOSE DIRT STOP-- *KAFF!*

CRUMBLE

=COUGH COUGH= =KAFF= =HACK=

YEEK!

CHAAR

KAFF! =HACK=

HUH?!

DON'T LET GO, I GOTCHA!

OKAY, MOVING FAST, CAN'T STOP, OOH CAN'TSTOP-WHATAREWE-GONNA--

!!!

WHEN I SAY PULL, PULL!

SCHRRRR

PULL!

SHRRR

KLIK-DING

WE...

...WE'RE NOT GONNA MAKE IT!

MY TURN!

WHAH!

GRIP

SCHRRP

WH-WHO...

IT'S ASHE, RIGHT? WE'RE HERE TO HELP. I'M BELLE, NICE TO--

DON'T HURT US!

I DON'T WANNA FIGHT!

LISTEN TO ME CAREFULLY. THIS IS *VERY* IMPORTANT.

HONK

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN REMEMBER THAT?

FUNNY CLOWN NOSE...

IF YOU TELL ANYONE, I WILL DISASSEMBLE YOUR BICYCLE AND HIDE EVERY PIECE.

ASHE, WERE YOU OUT HERE WHEN THE FIRE STARTED?

IT WASN'T US! RED HOT AND I WERE GOOD!

I SAW WHO DID IT. IT WAS A LADY WITH BIG SPIKES AND A BOY MY SIZE.

THE LADY MADE LIGHTNING WITH HER HANDS, *THAT'S* WHAT STARTED THE FIRE!

SO IT *WASN'T* ME.

A LADY THROWING AROUND LIGHTNING... THAT'S A NEW ONE.

I SAW TWO PEOPLE FITTING THAT DESCRIPTION, TOO, WALKING THROUGH THE FIRE.

YOU BELIEVE ME?

OF COURSE! NOW LET'S GET YOU BACK TO YOUR DAD, OKAY? CAN YOU HELP US DO THAT?

OKAY!

IF WE FOLLOW THE RIVER DOWNSTREAM, IT'LL LEAD BACK. ME 'N' RED HOT COME UP HERE ALL THE TIME.

IT'S BETTER THAN THE FIRE...

THEN DOWNSTREAM IT IS!

GREEK

!

GRA-C-C-C-K

WATCH OUT!

C-C-C

!!!

SCREECH

...

!

CLOSE ONE!

KRAA

TANGLE!

I KNOW, I'M-- DANG IT!

SWAT

!

KRUNCH

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

IB
ITO

GRAB MY TAIL!

AHH-- GOT IT!

UNF! STUPID HEAVY--

SLOSH

SPLOOSH

WAH!

OOFDA...

THAT WAS...

...AWESOME!

LET'S ROLL IT AGAIN!

NO!

HANG ON... IT'S ABOUT TO GET BUMPY!

THERE'S NO WAY. WE'RE ALL GONNA GET SPLINTERED!

I DON'T WANNA GET...

...WAAAH!

WHOA, HEY...

LET'S BE BRAVE TOGETHER, OKAY? NOBODY'S GONNA GET HURT. I'LL MAKE SURE.

PROMISE?

Y-YEAH! PROMISE!

WOO!

HOW ARE YOU ENJOYING THIS?!

HOW ARE YOU *NOT*?

I'VE WANTED TO BE AN ADVENTURER *FOREVER*.

DOING NEW THINGS, HELPING PEOPLE, JUST GOING FOR IT, LIKE WITH WHISPER...

WHO'S WHIS-- *GYAH!*

THWAK

THIS IS WHAT I *LOVE!*

SWISH

BELIEVING IN YOURSELF LIKE THAT... IT DOESN'T COME EASILY TO EVERYONE. YOU'RE LUCKY.

HUH. NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT THAT WAY.

SPLASH

SHRRRRRRRR

WHUH-OH... EVERYBODY HANG ON TIGHT!

RAH

SKRRAAAH

WAA-
HOO-
HOO-
HOOOO!

HUH?

TANGLE! BELLE!

TAKE OVER FOR ME!

JEWEL! COME QUICK!

THERE!

WHERE ARE THEY?!

TANGLE!

BLUGH... M'OKAY...

WHERE ARE THE--OH!

DON'T WORRY, I GOTCHA COVERED.

ASHE!

DAD!

YOU--DID YOU KEEP MY BOY SAFE OUT THERE?

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU...

WE WERE BRAVE *TOGETHER!*

THAT'S FINE, THERE'S NO NEED.

IT'S WHAT I DO, I GUESS.

LOOKS LIKE THE CAMPGROUND'S STILL IN ONE PIECE. THAT'S GOOD!

FOR NOW...

THE FIREBREAK WON'T HOLD FOR--

--BADNIK!

WAIT! IT'S SAFE!

AT LEAST, WE THINK IT IS...

IT HELPED US GET OUT OF THE WOODS. I GUESS IT'S DEFECTIVE?

A FRIENDLY MOTOBUG? THERE'S A FIRST FOR EVERYTHING.

THEY'RE KINDA *CUTE* WHEN THEY'RE NOT TRYING TO RUN YOU OVER.

WE'VE GOT BIGGER PROBLEMS RIGHT NOW. AT THIS RATE, IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THE FIRE BREAKS THROUGH HERE.

IT MIGHT BE FOR THE BEST TO CALL IT OFF AND FINISH THE EVACUATION.

I GUESS THAT'S IT FOR THE FOREST...

I... I'M SORRY I DRAGGED ALL OF YOU INTO THIS MESS.

IF ANYBODY WANTS TO LEAVE, I WON'T BLAME YOU. BUT IF THERE'S *ANY* WAY LEFT TO FIGHT THE FIRE, I THINK WE'VE GOTTA TRY.

YOU CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF FOR THIS, AMY!

AND I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE... THIS IS TOO MUCH FUN!

YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING IDEA OF "FUN..." BUT YEAH. WE'VE GOT TO HELP.

I THINK...

...I HAVE A PLAN.

YOU DO?

I-I'M NOT SURE IF IT'LL WORK, THOUGH! IT'S RISKY, AND IT'LL TAKE ALL OF US...

WE CAN TACKLE ANYTHING IF WE'RE WORKING TOGETHER!

YEAH!

WHAT ARE YOU--

IT'S A THING YOU DO AS A TEAM, AND AS FRIENDS.

?

AND YOU WANT ME TO--

OF COURSE!

LET'S GO!

TANGLE, AMY, I NEED YOU TO DAM THE RIVER. THINK YOU CAN DO THAT?

I'VE GOT A FEW IDEAS!

GREAT! BELLE, YOU'RE WITH ME.

EVERYONE, PLEASE MOVE BACK TO THE PARK GATE! BE READY FOR EVACUATION!

READY!

OKAY, HERE GOES...

HNNNG!

RRGH--

--IT'S WORKING! KEEP GOING!

KRUNCH

GRUMBLE

WHOOM

SSSSSWWWRRRRRRRRRRRRRR

ONE FLOOD, COMING RIGHT UP!

SPLSH

HURRY, PLEASE!

DANG IT!

AAAH!

IT'S OKAY! WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

VRRRM

OKAY, THAT SHOULD DO IT...

QUICK, BREAK THE DAM!

BREAK IT? I DIDN'T ACTUALLY THINK THAT FAR AHEAD...

IT'S NOTHING A LITTLE *SMASHING* CAN'T FIX!

EVERYBODY STAND BACK!

KYAH!

PIKO

THAT SHOULD RETURN THE RIVER TO ITS NATURAL COURSE, ALTHOUGH THERE MIGHT BE SOME NEW *WHITEWATER.*

THAT'S A BONUS IN MY BOOK!

EVERYBODY'S BACK AT THE GATE!

HOW ARE THINGS LOOKING NOW?

WELL...

"...THE WATER SOAKING THE GROUND WILL STOP THE FIRE FROM SPREADING THROUGH THE UNDERGROWTH...

"...AND THE TREES IN CAMP ARE FAR ENOUGH APART TO PREVENT SPREAD THROUGH THE CANOPY...

"...WITH ANY LUCK, THE CAMPGROUND WILL BE ENOUGH TO STOP THE FIRE FROM SPREADING FARTHER DOWN THE VALLEY."

THEN YOU...

YOU DID IT, JEWEL!

NOT ME... WE DID IT!

YEAH!

THERE'S NO WAY I COULD HAVE ORGANIZED EVERYTHING WITHOUT AMY'S HELP.

AW, YOU JUST NEEDED A LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT!

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ABLE TO...

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!

JEWEL, THERE'S SOMETHING I GOTTA DO, TOO...

...I'M QUITTING THE RESORTRATION!

UH...

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!

WELL IT IS, BUT NOT LIKE HOW IT--

--AH, GEEZ.

TANGLE. IT'S OKAY.

I... I KNOW. THE RESTORATION HAS BEEN STIFLING YOU. BUT YOU *STAYED*, FOR *ME*.

AND I LET YOU DO IT BECAUSE I WASN'T BRAVE ENOUGH TO GO IT ALONE...

I...

WHAT THE RESTORATION'S DOING... IT'S NOT FOR EVERYONE. THE WORLD NEEDS PEOPLE LIKE YOU, TOO, TANGLE. SO EVEN IF YOU GO YOUR OWN WAY, IT'S OKAY. *I'LL BE OKAY.*

NO MATTER WHAT, I'M SO, SO PROUD OF YOU.

THANKS, JEWEL.

LATER...

WOOD GLUE

OKAY, CAREFUL AS YOU PLACE IT.

I'VE GOT A CLAMP...

PERFECT! THANKS, TAILS.

AW, IT'S NOTHING.

WITH THAT TAKEN CARE OF, WE CAN TAKE A LOOK AT THIS LITTLE GUY...

...WE'VE MET OTHER EGGMAN ROBOTS THAT LEARNED TO DEFY THEIR PROGRAMMING, BUT THEY'VE ALL BEEN MORE *ADVANCED* MODELS.

DO YOU THINK WE COULD DO THIS FOR *OTHER* BADNIKS?

THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO FIND OUT!

IF WE COULD EVEN HELP JUST A FEW...

...AND I THOUGHT WE WERE GONNA CRASH FOR SURE, BUT THEN WHAM! BELLE DID HER SUPER KICK THING AND WE *JUMPED THE ENTIRE GORGE!*

IT WAS SICK!

WE FELL IN THE RIVER RIGHT AFTER THAT *ANYWAY*, BUT STILL.

AND I MISSED IT ALL? *MAN!*

YOU *WANT* TO GET DUNKED IN A RIVER?

YOU'VE GOT A POINT THERE.

SO, IF YOU'RE DOIN' YOUR OWN THING NOW, WHAT'S YOUR NEXT MOVE?

I'M GONNA FIND WHISPER.

A WHILE BACK SHE ASKED ME IF I WANTED TO TRAVEL WITH HER*. I'M READY NOW.

*STH: TANGLE AND WHISPER #4--EDS.

AAAND I MIGHT HAVE BEEN A LITTLE *HASTY* ABOUT QUITTING THE RESTORATION.

JEWEL AND I TALKED ABOUT IT SOME MORE, AND WE'RE GONNA TRY SOMETHING *NEW*.

WELL IF YOU GET INTO ANYTHING FUN, LET ME KNOW!

WILL DO!

THANK GOODNESS IT ALL WORKED OUT IN THE END!

SOMETIMES A LITTLE CHANGE IS JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED.

NO! NO DOCTORS! ARE YOU *TRYING* TO JINX US?

WHAT? I'D HAVE FIGURED YOU'D BE RARIN' TO GO AFTER THAT *NICE, RELAXING VACATION* OF YOURS.

AHH, I *GIVE UP*... I GUESS A BREAK JUST ISN'T IN THE CARDS.

I'M GLAD THE GIRLS AND I WERE THERE TO HELP, THOUGH. THINGS COULD HAVE GOTTEN *REALLY* BAD.

LET'S HOPE THAT FIRE WAS JUST A *FLUKE*.

. . .

SHFF SHFF SHFF

K-KRACKLE

...

!

FIREWATCH, COME IN.

"YUP. IT'S LIKE YOU SAID..."

"...THIS WAS NO ACCIDENT."

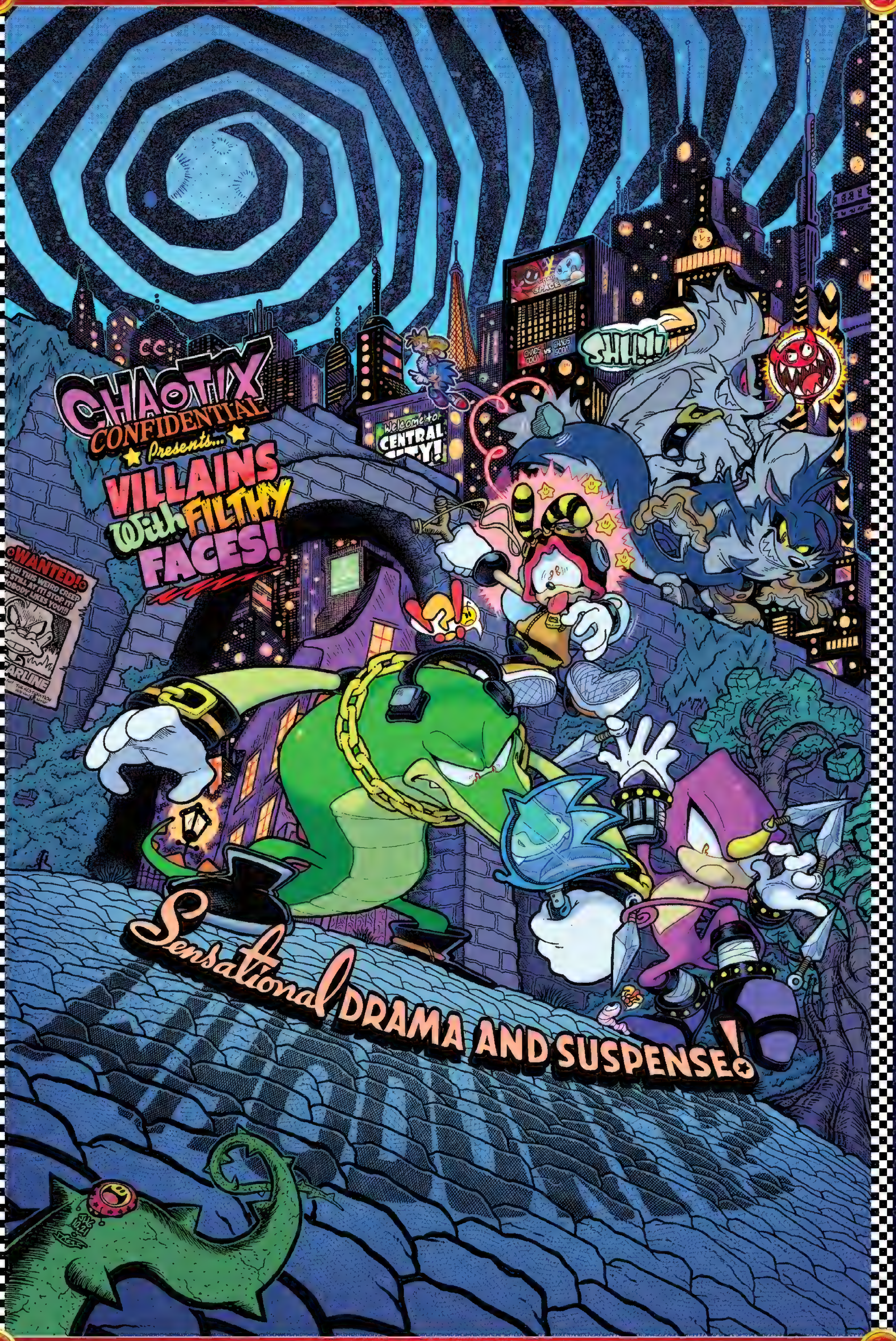
STRANGE ATTACK ON CITY

MISSING

CHAOS COLA

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY JONATHAN H. GRAY COLORS BY REGGIE GRAHAM



WELL, FOLKS, THE ROOSTER'S CROWIN' AND YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS! I'LL BE BACK TOMORROW WITH MORE ADVICE AND TUNES TO GET YOU THROUGH THE NIGHT.

KTBR 199.2

AND REMEMBER, YOU'RE LISTENING TO--

OOH! CAN I SAY IT? I WANNA SAY IT!

IT'S 199.2, KTBR!

ABOUT TIME YOU TWO GOT HERE. C'MON IN AND COLLECT THE LITTLE TERROR.

KTBR 199.2

DON'T DO ANYTHING DUMB DURING THE DAY, 'CAUSE NITE CAN'T HELP YOU!

BYEEE-- OOP!

CLIK

VECTOR! ESPIO! THERE'S MY FAVORITE DETECTIVE TEAM. HERE TO PICK UP RADIO'S LATEST STAR?

DIDJA HEAR ME? I HELPED PICK THE SONGS AND FIX PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS!

HE'S A NATURAL!

I WANNA COME BACK EVERY NIGHT AND--ZZZZ...

THANKS FOR WATCHING HIM. YOU GUYS ARE LIFESAVERS.

PLOP

WHAT WAS IT THIS TIME, A RAMPAGING MONSTER? DEADLY ASSASSINS?

...RETURNING LIBRARY BOOKS. CHARMY'S BANNED FOR LIFE, BUT IF WE TOLD HIM, HE'D BE HEARTBROKEN.

HEY, I GOT QUITE A FEW CALLS DURING THE SHOW FROM CENTRAL CITY THAT YOU THREE MIGHT WANT TO LOOK INTO... I THINK THERE'S A CASE IN IT FOR YA. INTERESTED?

A CASE?

"WE'RE ALWAYS INTERESTED!"

POWER OUTAGES, TRAFFIC PROBLEMS... IT SOUNDS LIKE THESE PEOPLE ARE DEALING WITH A *BAD THUNDERSTORM*, NOT CRIME.

NITE'S GOT A GOOD NOSE FOR THESE THINGS. HAS HE EVER LED US WRONG BEFORE?

HM. HE'S CERTAINLY LED US INTO *TROUBLE* BEFORE. TROUBLE DOESN'T TEND TO GET US *PAID*.

IF WE FIGURE OUT WHAT'S UP, I'M *SURE* SOMEBODY WILL PONY UP A REWARD!

CHAO MOM

...ARE WE THERE YET?

*RRGH... I AM **NOT** MISSING OUT ON ANOTHER CASE BECAUSE OF TRAFFIC!** C'MON, CHARMY--FLY US OUT OF HERE, AND I'LL GET YOU SOME ICE CREAM LATER.

YAY! I WANT SPRINKLES!

**STH #43--EDS.*

HOOOOONK!

HEY! THAT'S CHEATING!

Y'ALL'RE JUST JEALOUS YOU DIDN'T THINK OF IT *FIRST*!

MAN, IT DIDN'T LOOK THIS ROUGH ON THE NEWS... WHERE DO WE EVEN *START?*

YOU'RE THE ONE SLAMMING ON THE BRAKES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE INTERSECTION, NOT ME!

IT WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN A *PROBLEM* IF YOU WEREN'T DRIVING LIKE A *MANIAC!*

EXCUSE ME, I'M WITH THE *CHAOTIX DETECTIVE AGENCY*, DO EITHER OF YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

THERE WAS A BIG ELECTRICAL *SURGE*, THEN THE WHOLE *CITY* WENT *HAYWIRE!*

LIGHTS FLICKING ON AND OFF, TRAFFIC SIGNALS CHANGING AT RANDOM, THE *WORKS!*

AND EVERYONE'S SUDDENLY *FORGOTTEN HOW TO DRIVE.*

WATCH IT, PAL...

HEY, ARE YOU GUYS HERE TO HELP OUT?

I HEARD THAT EVEN THE RESTORATION'S RESPONDERS ARE STUCK!

MY NAN'S WAITING ACROSS TOWN...

GEEZ, EVERYBODY HERE IS REALLY ANGRY!

WE'RE GETTING NOWHERE WITH THIS.

NOBODY SEEMS TO HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT--OR WHO--CAUSED IT...

I KNOW WHO DONE DID IT!

I SAW 'EM! COMIN' OUT OF THE *SEWER!*

IT WAS A CENTRAL CITY *MUTANT MONSTER CROCODILE...* HAD TO BE!

OOOOO...

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT *THAT*, BUT...

WATCH OUT, THEY'LL EAT YER LITTLE BEE FRIEND!

...WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SEE MORE FROM *UNDER* THE STREET.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

PROMISING.

DANG! WHOEVER DID THIS IS A TOUGH CUSTOMER. I'M ALMOST GLAD THEY'RE LONG GONE.

BUT THERE'S A CROCODILE RIGHT HERE?

OH, HUSH UP.

SPLASH

!

WHAT WAS THAT?!

HEY, LOOK! THERE'S SOMEBODY THERE!

GET 'EM, CHAOTIX!

CHARMY!

HERE I COME!

WHOOSH

STINGER ATTAAACK!

GAH!

OOP--

KA-THUNK

WHERE--

THIS WAY! FOLLOW ME!

UGH! CAN'T SEE A THING DOWN THIS WAY...

...NO GOOD. WE CAN'T CHASE A GUY WE CAN'T SEE.

I MUCH PREFER WHEN THE SHADOWS ARE ON *OUR* SIDE...

EW... WHAT'S THAT *SMELL?*

SOMETHING DOWN HERE **REEKS.**

I SAY WE MAKE A *TACTICAL RETREAT.*

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN! PHEW!

MAN, THIS STINKS.

IT'S A LOT BETTER OUT HERE, THOUGH?

I MEAN FIGURATIVELY.

HEY, I THINK HE DROPPED THAT WHEN HE RAN!

THAT'S SOMETHING...

IS IT A CLUE?

DID I SPOT A CLUE?

IT'S FULL OF SCRAP METAL... WHO WOULD WANT THIS?

I DO NOT KNOW, BUT...

CENTRAL SHIPPING YARD

...I KNOW WHERE THEY CAME FROM.

WHERE IS EVERYBODY?

I GUESS THERE'S NOT MUCH POINT WORKING IN THE SHIPPING DISTRICT WHEN ALL THE *ROADS* ARE PLUGGED UP.

BETTER SPREAD OUT AND START LOOKING FOR... WHATEVER IT IS WE'RE LOOKING FOR.

I'M GOING WITH ESPIO. YOU'RE STILL STINKY FROM THE SEWER.

I AM NOT!

WAIT. DID THE SMELL FOLLOW US, OR ARE WE ON ITS *TRAIL?*

:SNIFF: *YOU'RE RIGHT!* WE MUST BE ON THE RIGHT TRACK!

END OF THE LINE...

...THIS PLACE HAS SURE SEEN BETTER DAYS.

LOOKS ABANDONED...

HEY! ANYBODY HO--

SHH! MAYBE THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY WANT US TO THINK!

...

I HEAR VOICES.

LET ME HANDLE THIS.

IF THERE'S TROUBLE, JUST HOLLER AND WE'LL BACK YOU UP.

KRI-C-CREE-CREAK

I SWEAR, I WAS MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS, DOING LIKE YOU SAID...

...WHEN BAM! THEY WERE RIGHT ON TOP OF ME! DON'T WORRY THOUGH, I GAVE 'EM THE SLIP.

GAVE 'EM A WHIFF OF THE OL' "STINK BOMBER." TURNED 'EM RIGHT AROUND.

WERE YOU ABLE TO DELIVER THE CRATE?

ERM... NO. MUST'VE DROPPED IT IN ALL THE EXCITEMENT.

GUESS WE CAN'T GET OUT OF THE CITY THAT WAY AGAIN.

...

OUR *ONE* ROUTE FOR MOVING CARGO, *GONE*. BECAUSE YOU WERE SPOTTED IN A SEWER.

I BROUGHT YOU TWO ON BECAUSE I NEED HELP I CAN RELY ON. HELP I CAN *TRUST*.

HEY, ALL THIS SNEAKIN' AROUND ISN'T EASY...

YEAH, HOW WAS I SUPPOSED TO KNOW THE CHAOTIX WOULD BE DOWN THERE? THEY'RE NOT PUSHOVERS!

I'VE HEARD OF THEM.

THIS IS EVERYTHING I COULD SALVAGE FROM MY HOME BEFORE MY PROPERTY WAS CONFISCATED. THE LAST OF MY *WEALTH*, MY *HOPE*...

...*STUCK* HERE, WITH NO WAY TO GET IT OUT OF THE CITY TO MY BUYERS BECAUSE THE WHOLE CITY'S BEEN TURNED UPSIDE DOWN.

ALL BECAUSE YOU GOT *SPOOKED* BY SOME THIRD-RATE GUMSHOES WHO *WEREN'T EVEN LOOKING FOR YOU*.

SO, DO I NEED TO SHOW YOU WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO *DISAPPOINT* ME?

CREEEAK

BLAM

GR-THOOM

!!!

YOU TWO ARE IN *LUCK*--LOOKS LIKE YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO REDEEM YOURSELVES.

BLAM BLAM BLAM

FWEEEET

BOOM

GRRAAAH

THAT'S YOUR CUE, BOYS.

YOU TRACKED US DOWN?

MIGHT *THINK* WE'RE HUMBLED...

...BUT YOU'VE NEVER TANGLED WITH ROUGH & TUMBLE!

SO THAT'S HOW YOU *PLAY* IT? OKAY, THEN I'LL *SAY* IT...

...YOUR JUDGMENT'S SLIPPIN' THINKING TO TRY THE CROC? GONNA BE TRIPPIN' BETTER WATCH THE WALK...

...CHAMELEON'S THE OTHER ONE TO FEAR, NEVER KNOW WHEN HE'LL APPEAR, BUT IT'S *YOU* I WANNA HEAR...

RRRAH!

...STINGERS COMIN' ON THE NEXT PASS, BEEHIVE'S READY, GON' KICK--

THAT'S ME! I'M THE BEE, RIGHT?

SO IF YOU DIDN'T CAUSE THE TROUBLE DOWNTOWN, WHO DID?

ONLY WE GET TO RHYME!

AND YOUR METER IS TRASH!

THAT'LL DO, BOYS.

CHARMY, VECTOR-- THESE THREE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE POWER FAILURES. THEY'RE NOT OUR TARGET.

THEY'RE DEFINITELY NOT *INNOCENT*, THOUGH. WHO ARE YOU ANYWAY, GRAMPS?

ONCE UPON A TIME, MY REPUTATION WOULD HAVE PRECEDED ME...

...YOU KNOW, I WAS PERFECTLY CONTENT TO ENJOY MY *RETIREMENT* IN WHITE PARK WITH MY CHAO.

THAT IS, UNTIL SOME WILD PACK OF DO-GOODERS TRASHED MY HOME...* NOW I SEE THAT IT WAS A BLESSING IN DISGUISE-- A WAKE-UP CALL, EVEN.

THERE'S A *WHOLE NEW GENERATION* OF HEROES OUT THERE! HEROES I'VE NEVER TRICKED, SWINDLED, OR BEATEN! AND AS LONG AS I'M ALIVE, THAT SIMPLY WON'T STAND. IT'S HIGH TIME I *REBUILT* MY EMPIRE.

IT MAY BE A HUMBLE START, BUT IT'S *RELIABLE*. THERE'S *ALWAYS* SOMEONE OUT THERE LOOKING FOR WEAPONS.

*STH #36--EDS.

ESPIO, STAND BACK!

WHAM

CRASH

LOOKS LIKE ALL YOUR STUFF'S GONE. TOO BAD.

...

MOVE. WE'RE NOT LETTING YOU GO.

OF COURSE. THERE'S JUST ONE THING...

...MIGHT THESE BE YOURS, SON?

HOW DID YOU GET--

SWOSH

GAKK--

SPLAT

YIPE!

SPREAD THE WORD, CHAOTIX...

...CLUTCH THE OPOSSUM IS BACK!

...I'M SORRY. I FAILED.

NAH, IT'S ALL GOOD. WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WE WERE GETTING INTO.

SO WHO *DID* MESS UP THE CITY?

I DUNNO, CHARMY. THE TRAIL'S GONE COLD.

"I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS *NEXT*."

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

READY?

ALL THE CABLES ARE IN, MOTOBUG-- I MEAN, MOTOBUD-- NONAGGRESSION SUBROUTINE IS ISOLATED, AND THE WIRELESS BROADCAST IS PRIMED.

BUT WHAT IF--

AHEM! I'M WAITING...

OOPS, SORRY! SENDING NOW!

BIP

SIGNAL SENT

YANK

SWIP

WOW, IT'S GREAT TO BE *SONIC THE HEDGEHOG*, COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF ANY NEARBY *DANGER!*

I SURE HOPE NO *BADNIKS* TRY TO *SNEAK UP* ON ME.

IT WORKED! THEIR ATTACK RESPONSE WAS COMPLETELY NEGATED!

AM I REALLY *THAT* BORING? I'M LOSING TO A ROCK.

IF WE CAN GET THIS REPROGRAMMING TO STICK, ALL EGGMAN'S ROBOTS COULD BE SAVED.

LET'S NOT GET AHEAD OF OURSELVES. EGGMAN'S ALWAYS GOT SOMETHING NEW UP HIS SLEEVE.

AND WITH THE WEIRD STUFF THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING LATELY, I DUNNO... IT DOESN'T *SEEM* LIKE HIS STYLE, BUT...

IF EGGMAN STARTS SOMETHING, WE'LL HANDLE IT!

THE ONLY THING I'M WORRIED ABOUT RIGHT NOW IS *LUNCH*.

HOW DO TACOS SOUND?

OKAY! ARE YOU COMING IN, BELLE?

I THINK I'LL STAY OUT HERE FOR A WHILE.

WAIT, NOT CHILI DOGS? ARE YOU OKAY?

I LIKE TO EAT OTHER THINGS! I'LL JUST HAVE A CHILI DOG FOR *DESSERT*.

LATER...

SSSCARR

SCARRD

MOTOBUD?

SSSCRIP

WHAT'S UP, LITTLE DUDE?

SCRRR

DO YOU WANNA GO...

SCRAAA

...OUT?

OKAY, LET'S GIVE THE DOOR A BREAK--

HM. THAT'S NOT GOOD.

VRRRM

SORNNNGH... IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT...

SWISH

CRASH

GET... OUT.

HAVE TO... GET OUT.

HEY, WAIT!

TAILS!

LOOK AT THEIR EYES... THEY'RE BOTH UNDER A *CONTROL SIGNAL!* LIKE WHAT WE WERE *TESTING*, BUT SO MUCH WORSE.

FIGHT IT, BELLE! I KNOW YOU CAN!

LURCH

THOK

THINK YOU CAN WHIP UP SOMETHING TO FIX THIS?

I-I'LL TRY. BUY ME SOME TIME.

HAVE TO... GET OUT...

NOBODY'S GOING ANYWHERE JUST YET!

THIS HAS "MAD DOCTOR" WRITTEN ALL OVER IT...

GIMME A CLUE! BLINK ONCE FOR *EGGMAN*, TWICE FOR *STARLINE!*

KRRIK

...I DON'T HAVE THAT ONE IN MY BLINK CODE. GOT ANYTHING EASIER?

KLIK-DING

OKAY, NOT IN A BANTERING MOOD. *NOTED.*

HOW'S IT GOING IN THERE, TAILS?

ALMOST READY, HANG ON!

AT LEAST SHE'S EASY TO D--GAH!

CHA-CHUNK

SHK-CHK-CHK

GET... OUT...

WHAM

THIS IS GONNA HURT, SO SORRY IN ADVANCE!

ZZZ

BELLE?

...I-IT'S ME. I'M OKAY.

IT'S A GOOD THING I HAD THAT PROTOTYPE ZETI ZAPPER* LEFT OVER. IT'LL STOP ANY WIRELESS SIGNALS GOING IN OR OUT.

ARE YOU... SURE YOU'RE OKAY?

*SEE STH #42--EDS.

IT WAS A BEACON. BADNIKS--*ALL OF THEM*--HAVE BEEN CALLED IN. *EGGMAN IS SUMMONING AN ARMY*. AND I...

...I AM GOING TO FIND THAT MAN AND GIVE HIM A PIECE OF MY MIND BECAUSE I AM *TIRED* OF GETTING *YANKED AROUND*.

AN ARMY?! WHERE? DID YOU GET COORDINATES?

TO THE SOUTH, I THINK. PRETTY FAR AWAY... DANG IT! IT'S ALREADY FADING.

WELL...

"...WE'VE STILL GOT ONE BADNIK WHO KNOWS WHERE TO GO."

IT LOOKS LIKE THE OTHER BADNIKS ALREADY RAN OFF.

THEN WE'D BETTER GET MOVING.

HERE GOES!

LEAD THE WAY, LITTLE GUY.

VRRRM

WHOA...

!

I THINK THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE DOWN THERE!

SONIC! WE'VE GOTTA--

SWOOSH

DANG IT-- SIT DOWN! DON'T GET THEIR ATTENTION!

W-WE'VE GOT TO CLEAR A PATH! *BLAST* OUR WAY THROUGH!

WHOOSH

IF YOU DON'T GET IN THEIR WAY, THEY WON'T BUG YOU. THERE'S A HOUSE UP THERE--GET INSIDE AND WAIT FOR THIS TO BLOW OVER. OKAY?

UH... YES, SIR.

COOL. LET'S GO, GUYS.

LATER...

WE'VE BEEN FOLLOWING THESE BADNIKS FOR *HOURS*. DO YOU THINK WE'RE GETTING CLOSE?

BEATS ME. LAST I CHECKED, THERE'S NOTHING OUT THIS WAY BUT THESE WOODS.

THERE'S GOTTA BE *SOMETHING*...

THAT'S NOT A GOOD FACE.

THERE'S AN ENTIRE *CITY!* IT DEFINITELY LOOKS LIKE EGGMAN'S!

WE HAVE TO STOP MOTOBUD--

BRRRR

THIS LITTLE GUY'S NOT GONNA TURN AROUND, AND I ONLY KNOW *ONE WAY* TO STOP A BADNIK.

LET'S... I DON'T KNOW, PUT THE ZAPPER ON MOTOBUD INSTEAD! THAT'LL STOP--

WE CAN'T. AS SOON AS IT'S OFF YOU, YOU'LL BE VULNERABLE TO THE SIGNAL AGAIN.

I'VE BEEN STUDYING ITS CONSTRUCTION... I MIGHT BE ABLE TO CUT MOTOBUD'S *POWER.*

AND THAT WON'T SCRAP IT?

...

I DON'T KNOW.

BUT I'M NOT LETTING EGGMAN HAVE THIS.

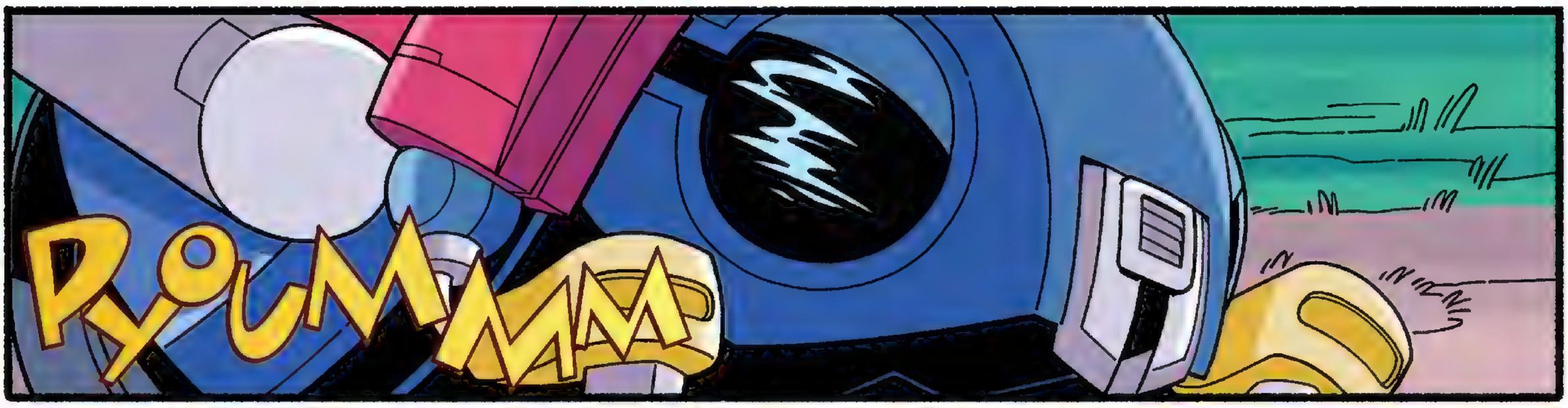
KA-CHACK

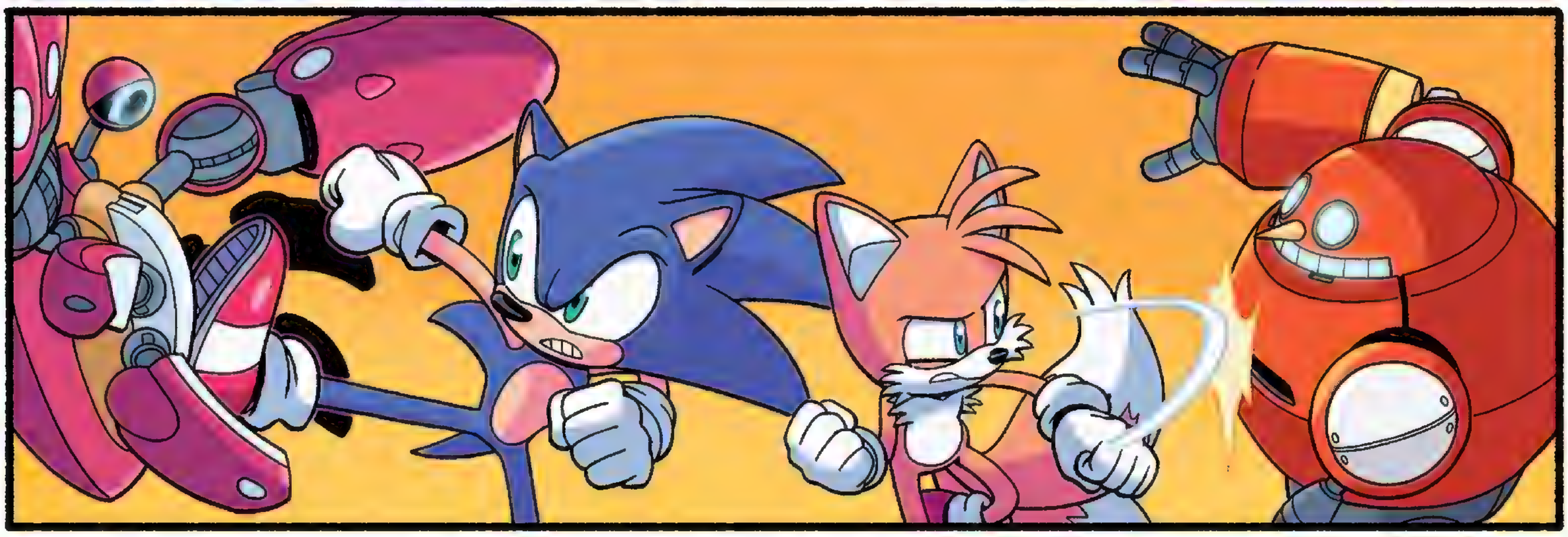
SCRIK-
SCRIK-
SCRIK

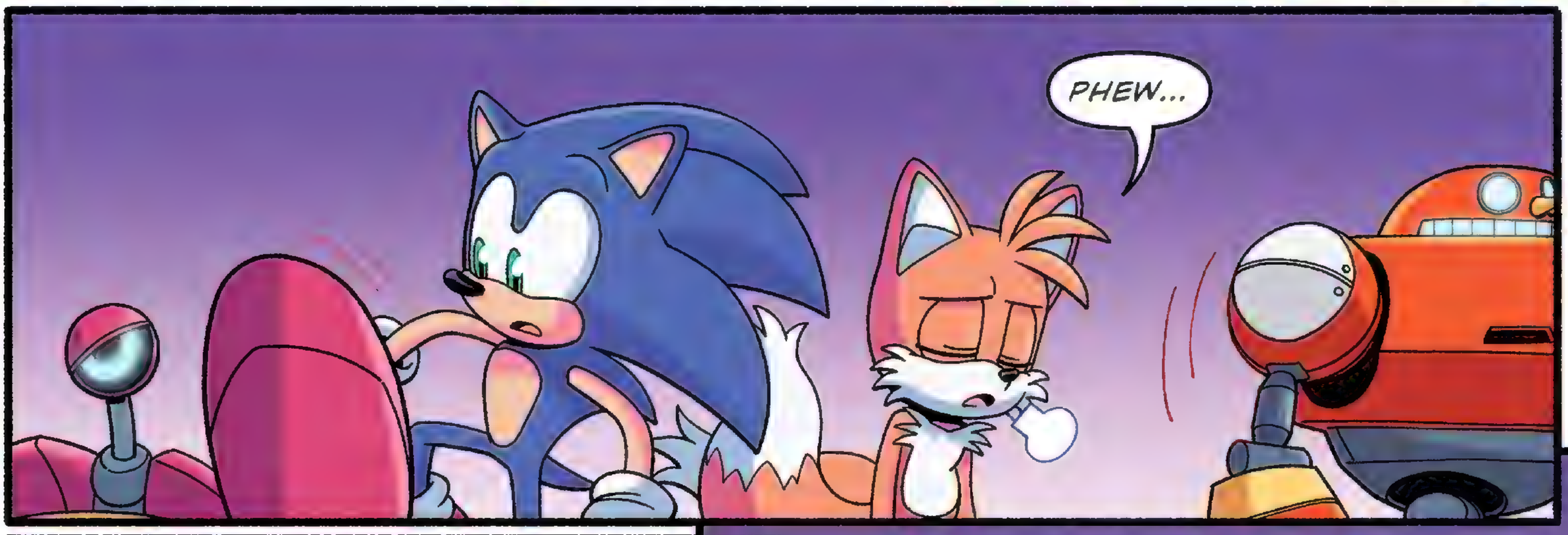
RRR...

HATE TO RUSH YA, BUT WE'VE SUDDENLY GOTTEN *VERY* POPULAR...

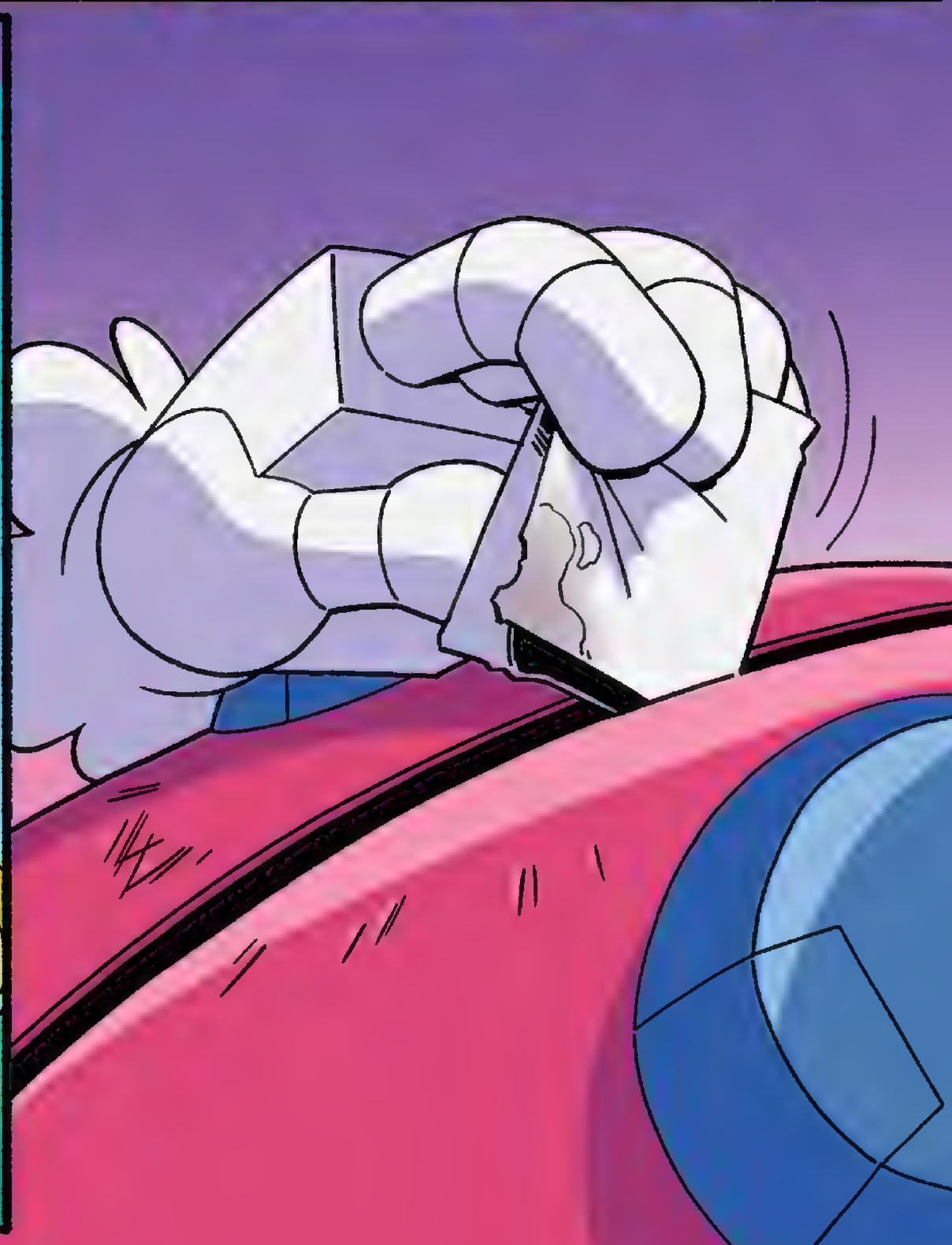
KZZAK


PLOUMMM




PHEW...

UH, BELLE?
I THOUGHT I SAW--



"TO WHOMEVER FINDS THIS LETTER, IT IS FOR MY DAUGHTER, BELLE THE TINKERER. I HOPE THAT ONE DAY SHE MIGHT READ IT, UNLIKELY AS THAT MAY BE.

"THOUGH I AM A CAPTIVE, I DO NOT ASK FOR RESCUE. IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT. THIS IS A CONFESSION, TO EASE AN OLD MAN'S CONSCIENCE.

"I'VE LIVED A GOOD LIFE, BRINGING JOY TO THOSE AROUND ME. WATCHING YOU BECOME THE WONDERFUL WOMAN YOU ARE.

"MY CAPTOR IS ADAMANT THAT I AM ACTUALLY THE WOULD-BE DESPOT, DR. EGGMAN. THE THOUGHT OF IT TURNS MY STOMACH. STILL, I CANNOT DENY THE LOGIC OF HIS EVIDENCE...

"I AM NOT DR. EGGMAN, BUT IF I SOMEHOW LOSE MYSELF TO THIS NIGHTMARE... I AM TRULY, DEEPLY SORRY. TO YOU, AND TO THE WORLD.

"I LOVE YOU, BELLE. I ALWAYS WILL. GOODBYE.

"--MR. TINKER"

HE'S REALLY GONE...

...I WAS *STUPID* TO THINK I COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

TMP

YOU'VE ALREADY MADE A DIFFERENCE, BELLE. ALL THE LITTLE WINS, THE GOOD MEMORIES BETWEEN THE HARD TIMES, THE FRIENDS WE FIND... *THOSE ARE REAL*. NOBODY CAN TAKE THAT AWAY.

WE'LL KEEP MOVING FORWARD. *TOGETHER.*

WE'VE GOTTA CHECK OUT THE CITY. IF YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO THE WORKSHOP, THAT'S OKAY.

...NO. SONIC'S RIGHT.

LET'S GO.

THAT'S MORE LIKE IT! HANG ON, YOU TWO. I THINK THIS CALLS FOR A LITTLE *EXTRA SPEED*.

BOOM

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

FILE: 1M9-SYM-001

"OPERATION REMASTER" IS MOVING INTO ITS FINAL TESTING STAGES.

WITH THIS, I WILL FINALLY BE ABLE TO BREAK WHAT I AFFECTIONATELY CALL "THE SONIC CYCLE."

FILE: 1M9-SYM-001

TO WIT: DR. EGGMAN STAGES A BOLD PLAN TO RESHAPE THE WORLD...

FILE: 1M9-SYM-001

...SONIC ARRIVES, SOMETIMES WITH HIS MENAGERIE OF FRIENDS, TO RUIN EVERYTHING...

FILE: 1M9-SYM-001

...UNTIL FINALLY THE DAY IS "SAVED." THE GENERAL POPULACE REBUILDS AND RETURNS TO THEIR REGULAR LIVES.

NO EVOLUTION. NO VISION. NO *FUTURE*.

FILE: 1M9-SYM-001

THANKFULLY, *I'M HERE*. STEP ONE OF "OPERATION REMASTER" WILL BE TO REMOVE DR. EGGMAN FROM PLAY.

HE IS A REVOLUTIONARY, A VISIONARY, AND GROOMS A FINE MUSTACHE. BUT HE GETS TUNNEL VISION WHEN IT COMES TO SONIC.

I HAVE STUDIED UNDER THE MASTER, SEEN HIS FEW SHORTCOMINGS, AND PERFECTED HIS TECHNIQUE.

HE'LL THANK ME IN THE END. I'M SURE OF IT.

FILE: 1M9-SYM-001

STEP TWO: REPLACE THE SO-CALLED "HEROES" WHO STAND IN THE WAY OF PROGRESS.

THE GENERAL POPULACE RELIES ON THEM FAR TOO MUCH, BUT IT'S FAR SIMPLER TO REPLACE A FEW CELEBRITIES THAN CHANGE SOCIETY.

BY CONTROLLING THE HERO-VERSUS-VILLAIN DYNAMIC, I WILL BE ABLE TO SHAPE THE WORLD AND ITS PEOPLE WITH THE VERY THEATRICS THEY'VE BECOME SO ACCUSTOMED TO.

FILE: 1M9-SYM-001

IT'S BEEN AN ARDUOUS JOURNEY TO GATHER AND ASSEMBLE ALL THE NECESSARY COMPONENTS TO MAKE THIS PLAN WORK.

BUT NOW, AT LONG LAST... *THEY'RE READY!*

"SONIC IS UNDENIABLY THE HERO OF THE WORLD. BUT BUILDING A BETTER METAL SONIC WON'T SUFFICE.

"SONIC IS MORE THAN JUST RAW POWER. HE'S ABOUT STYLE--*ATTITUDE*.

"I NEED THAT INDOMITABLE SPIRIT, THAT ROGUISH CHARM. HOWEVER, SINCE IT IS A LIABILITY AS MUCH AS IT'S A BOON...

"...*SURGE* WILL REPLACE HIM, AND I WILL KEEP THE BRAVADO ON A LEASH."

YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD TOUCH *ME*? *PATHETIC!*

"AS PREVIOUSLY NOTED, THERE ARE 'DESIGN FLAWS' INHERENT IN SONIC."

SPLISH

SPLISH

CHEAP SHOT FOR A CHEAP BOT!

"SURGE NEEDS A SUPPORT UNIT TO MAKE UP FOR HER SHORTCOMINGS. AN ANALYTICAL BALANCE TO THE BRASHNESS. SOMEONE TO LOOK BEFORE SHE LEAPS."

NICE ASSIST, KID. DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD.

SHUNK

"THUS *KITSUNAMI* WAS MODELED AFTER SONIC'S MOST BENEFICIAL ALLY: TAILS."

Y-YES, MA'AM. THANK YOU, MA'AM.

W-WE HAVE LESS THAN A MINUTE TO COMPLETE THE COURSE...

PFFT. ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD.

BOOM

SLAM

AAAND DONE!

IN RECORD TIME, TOO! C'MON, DOC. YOU CAN BE IMPRESSED.

YOU LEFT KITSUNAMI BEHIND.

I'M SORRY! I HAD TO RECHARGE MY PACK!

KIT GOT HERE EVENTUALLY. THE IMPORTANT ONE MADE IT IN RECORD TIME.

TEST? PASSED! ME? AWESOME! SO LET'S GET ON WITH THE MAIN MISSION ALREADY!

YOU'VE PROVEN PROFICIENCY IN A CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT.

THE NEXT STEP IS TO TEST YOUR SKILLS IN THE FIELD, BUT IN A WAY THAT WON'T--

I'M *REAL* TIRED OF YOU TALKING DOWN TO ME! WE GO *NOW*, AND WE GO *HARD!*

GO TO SLEEP.

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?!

YOU SAW NOTHING.

A PITY IT ISN'T THIS POTENT AGAINST ANYONE ELSE.

STILL, ONCE AGAIN, IT PAYS TO HAVE BUILT IN A WEAKNESS TO MY HYPNOSIS EFFECT...

UGH... WHAT HAPPENED?

YOU PUSHED YOUR ENHANCEMENTS TOO FAR AND HAD A BRIEF BLACKOUT. NOW THEN, SHALL WE DISCUSS YOUR FIRST LIVE FIELD TEST?

UH... YEAH. LAY IT ON ME.

FOREST RIDGE CAMPGROUNDS. THAT NIGHT.

"FIRST, IF WE'RE TO REMOVE SONIC FROM PLAY, WE NEED TO WEAKEN HIS SUPPORT BASE.

"NO, SURGE! NO ASSASSINATION!

"A VENGEFUL HERO IS DRIVEN, DEDICATED, AND MORALLY RIGHTEOUS...

"...BUT A HERO SUFFERING FROM A TRAGIC LOSS FROM A HORRIBLE ACCIDENT? THAT ONE'S BROKEN AND MOROSE."

LET'S SEE SONIC SAVE ALL YOU HAPPY CAMPERS FROM THIS.

BLAM

CENTRAL CITY. DAYS LATER.

"SECONDLY, WHILE I KNOW HOW POWERFUL YOU ARE, I NEED TO ASSESS YOUR FINESSE.

"OUR FIRST REAL MISSION MUST BE CLANDESTINE. SO I WANT YOU TO SOW CHAOS AND NOT GET CAUGHT."

LOOK AT 'EM. ACTING LIKE THEY DON'T HAVE A CARE IN THE WORLD. DIDN'T THE ZOMBOTS TEAR THIS CITY APART NOT TOO LONG AGO?*

THE RESTORATION HELPED THEM REBUILD. I--I--I THINK THEY JUST WANT TO BE... HAPPY?

*STH #21.

SUCKS TO BE THEM, 'CUZ I AIM TO MISBEHAVE.

I CAN USE MY HYDRO-COIL TAILS TO REACH UNDERGROUND, ACCESS AND MANIPULATE THE WIRING, AND THROW THE TRAFFIC LIGHTS AND POWER GRIDS INTO DISARRAY!

UH-HUH. YOU HAVE FUN WITH THAT.

I'MMA GO FAST!

W-WELL... YES... THERE'S THAT, TOO...

BOOM

POP

POP

A FEW MILES AWAY IN EMERALD TOWN.

OH DEAR, MR. PROWER. YOU TAKE AFTER DR. EGGMAN IN SOME SURPRISING WAYS...

...WHILE I COVERED MY TRACKS, HE'S ASTUTE ENOUGH TO REALIZE I WAS STUDYING BELLE FOR ***SOMETHING***. IF HE REVIEWS HER CODE HIMSELF, HE MAY REALIZE WHAT I'VE DONE TO SURGE AND KITSUNAMI.

FROM THERE, HE COULD DEVELOP SOME KIND OF COUNTERMEASURE. I NEED TO KNOW WHAT HE KNOWS AND DESTROY ANY RESEARCH HE HAS...

...HMM... NO IMMEDIATE SECURITY MEASURE. THE DOOR SEEMS TO BE REINFORCED.

VERY REINFORCED!

BLAST IT ALL...

BOOM! ONE SLEEPLESS CITY AND NOT A POLICE SIREN TO BE HEARD!

KITSUNAMI, SEE IF YOU CAN FEED YOUR HYDRO-COIL UNDER THE DOOR AND UNLOCK IT FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

MMM... NO, SIR. IT'S AIRTIGHT.

UH, HELLO? I PASSED YOUR TEST WITH FLYING COLORS AND TIME TO SPARE?

HOW ABOUT A LITTLE RECOGNITION?

LOOKS LIKE HE LEARNED FROM THE OUTBREAK AND UPGRADED. WELL PLAYED, BOY.

PSHT. FINE. IF YOU WANT IN THERE SO BAD, I'LL KNOCK A WALL IN.

NO! THE ENTIRE POINT OF THIS EXERCISE WAS STEALTH!

OUR TIME LIMIT IS UP. RETURN TO BASE, EVERYONE.

STARLINE BASE SIGMA. LATER.

CAREER CRIMINALS
ASSAULT
ENTRAL CITY

HEROES SAVE CAMPERS FROM **WILDFIRE**

WE FAILED...

HEY! WE DIDN'T GET CAUGHT! THAT WAS THE *POINT!*

I WANTED TO DEAL WITH SONIC'S GAL PALS DIRECTLY. ***SOMEBODY*** WANTED TO TRUST A WALL OF STUPID FLAME.

A CLOSE CALL FOR THEM ISN'T ANY BETTER OR WORSE THAN DR. EGGMAN'S TRACK RECORD.

WHATEVER. WE DID GOOD, RIGHT?

YOU DID ***WELL***. AND SO NOW IT'S FINALLY TIME...

AW, YEAH!

FOR THE FINAL TEST!

OH, COME ON!

YOU GAVE ME THE POWER TO DESTROY SONIC! LET! ME! DESTROY! SONIC!

I GAVE YOU THE POWER TO CHANGE THE WORLD, BUT IT WILL ONLY WORK IF YOU FOLLOW MY PLAN.

THE FIRST STEP IS TO SAFELY REMOVE DR. EGGMAN FROM PLAY. WE CAN ONLY DO *THAT* ONCE WE'RE SURE WE CAN STRIP HIM OF HIS SUPPORT.

I'VE SELECTED THIS REMOTE BASE TO TEST OUT MY UPDATED BYPASS ALGORITHM. WE WILL INFILTRATE THE BASE AND--

AND THEN WE GET YOUR SECURITY BLANKET OUT OF ITS SECURE BUNKER SO YOU FEEL SAFE ENOUGH TO DO ANOTHER STUPID TEST AND BLAH, BLAH, BLAH!

I--I--I THINK WE SHOULD BE CAREFUL. I DON'T WANT YOU TO GET HURT.

YOU SAYIN' I CAN'T HANDLE MYSELF?

N-NO!

YOU SAYIN' YOU WON'T DO YOUR JOB AND WATCH MY BACK?

N-N-NO!

WELL IF YOU AREN'T SAYIN' ANYTHING, *SHUT UP!*

LOOK, I GET YOU BRAINY TYPES LIKE TO THINK OF ALL THE ANGLES. BUT ME AND THAT FAKER BOY ARE SIMPLE CREATURES.

I HIT HIM FAST, I HIT HIM HARD, AND I KEEP *HITTING* UNTIL HE DOESN'T MOVE ANYMORE.

AND HOW DO YOU PLAN ON FINDING HIM?

I CAN RUN LAPS AROUND THE PLANET UNTIL I FIND HIM!

MMM AND IF HE'S WITH HIS FRIENDS?

THEN I TAKE THEM OUT, TOO!

OH REALLY? TAILS IS PROVIDING AIR SUPPORT, TANGLE AND WHISPER ARE STRIKING AT RANGE, AMY IS CLOSING IN, AND YOU CAN HANDLE SONIC?

I... WELL... *PROBABLY!*

KIT WOULD BE HANDLING ALL THOSE WORTHLESS EXTRAS!

I-I-I'D DO MY B-B-BEST...

POKE

DON'T PATRONIZE ME! I'LL DROWN YOU WITH YOUR OWN TAILS!

EEK

OH, FOR THE LOVE OF... STOP CRINGING! WE CAN'T TAKE OUT SONIC IF YOU'RE ALWAYS DOING THAT!

I-I-I'M S-S-SORRY!

UGH! WHY DO YOU EVEN WANT TO HELP ME?!

I DON'T KNOW!

WHY... DO I WANT TO DO THIS? ANY OF THIS?

I... HAVEN'T EVEN MET SONIC. I DON'T... THINK I HAVE?

DO YOU WANT TO DESTROY HIM STILL?

I WANT WHATEVER YOU WANT.

YEAH... BUT... WHY? DO YOU?

BUT WHY?!

...I DON'T KNOW...

AAAND REBOOT.

I THOUGHT KEEPING THINGS SIMPLE WOULD MAKE THINGS EASIER.

PERHAPS I SHOULD CRAFT A BIT OF BACKSTORY TO SHORE UP THEIR EMOTIONAL--

WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?!

GAH!

SLEEP! SLEEP! SLEEP!

NYO... I... WHAN... ANSHURES...

THUNK

WHEN I USED BELLE'S BASE CODE TO WRITE PERSONALITIES FOR THEM, I EXPECTED A LITTLE MORE STABILITY!

MAYBE THE DIFFERENCE WAS SHE WAS BUILT FROM SCRATCH? OR IS IT A BYPRODUCT OF...

THIS RESISTANCE TO THE HYPNOTIC CONTROL IS ALSO AN UNWELCOME BUG.

I'VE INVESTED TOO MUCH IN THEM NOW TO START OVER. I'LL JUST HAVE TO HANDLE THEM WITH MORE CARE.

ONCE WE BEGIN TO FULFILL THEIR PRIMARY DIRECTIVES, THEIR PERSONALITIES SHOULD EVEN OUT.

SHOWTIME.

WHA HAPPUN...

THANK GOODNESS YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! IS ANYTHING BROKEN? ANYTHING FEEL WRONG?

UH... NO?

MOST LIKELY BECAUSE KIT HERE CAUGHT YOU, EVEN THOUGH HE WAS GLITCHING AS WELL.

YOU ALWAYS HAVE MY BACK, DON'T YOU, DRIPPY? THANKS.

Y-YOU'RE WELCOME!

UGH... YOU SAID WE GLITCHED?

YES. WE GOT INTO A HEATED ARGUMENT, WHICH OVERLOADED YOUR UPGRADES.

YOU WANTED TO COMPLETE ONE MORE OPTIMIZATION TEST. I WANTED TO PUSH AHEAD INTO THE MAIN MISSION. TEMPERS FLARED AND... WELL, HERE WE ARE.

I'M SORRY. YOU WERE RIGHT. WE'LL GO AHEAD WITH THE FINAL TESTING PHASE IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT.

HUH. THAT SOUND RIGHT TO YOU?

I DO WANT TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE SAFE, MA'AM.

ALL RIGHT, THEN. SURE. WE'LL... *UH*... DO THE TEST. WHAT'S THE PLAN?

THE FIRST STEP IS TO SAFELY REMOVE DR. EGGMAN FROM PLAY. WE CAN ONLY DO *THAT* ONCE WE'RE SURE WE CAN STRIP HIM OF HIS SUPPORT.

I'VE SELECTED THIS REMOTE BASE TO TEST OUT MY UPDATED BYPASS ALGORITHM. WE WILL INFILTRATE THE BASE AND THEN...

ART BY EVAN STANLEY

FILE: 1M9-SYM-002

I HAVE TESTED SURGE AND KITSUNAMI AS BEST I CAN. NOW WE COME TO THE FINAL CHECK BEFORE INITIATING "OPERATION REMASTER."

WE MUST BE ***EXCEEDINGLY*** CAREFUL. IF THIS FAILS, THERE WILL BE NO SECOND CHANCES.

"PREVIOUSLY, I HAD USED AN OVERRIDE PROGRAM TO TAKE COMMAND OF DR. EGGMAN'S FORCES.*

"HOWEVER, IT RELIED ON THE NETWORK'S PERMISSIONS TO EXPLOIT BACKDOORS INTO THE EGGNET.

"FOR MY ENDGAME, I MUST BE ABLE TO OVERPOWER ***ALL*** DR. EGGMAN'S CONTROL DIRECTLY.

*STH: BAD GUYS #3--EDS.

"I CHOSE TO TURN EGG BASE SIGMA INTO MY OWN HEADQUARTERS.

"TONIGHT, I'LL BE TARGETING EGG BASE ALPHA FOR MY FINAL TEST."

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE ABOUT TO POP A BLOOD VESSEL, DOC.

KITSUNAMI. MAP.

YESSIR!

WE WILL ENTER ON THE SOUTH END. I WILL INFILTRATE THE WESTERN CONTROL TOWER AND UPLOAD THE COMMAND PROGRAM.

SURGE, YOU'LL BE ESCORTING KITSUNAMI TO THE EASTERN COMMS TOWER TO ENSURE NO ALERTS ARE BROADCAST TO THE EGGNET.

WHAT ABOUT THE NORTH TOWER?

A WI-FI TOWER SEPARATE FROM THE EGGNET.

EXCLUSIVELY FOR GAMING. THE DOCTOR'S PING IS IMMACULATE.

BACK IT UP A MINUTE, DOC.

I HAVE TO BABYSIT MY SUPPORT UNIT?

THAT'S RIGHT! SHE'S THE HERO. SHE SHOULD HAVE THE IMPORTANT JOBS.

NOBODY WAS TALKIN' TO YOU, DRIPPY!

S-SORRY...

WHY ARE YOU OBJECTING *NOW?* THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED, *REMEMBER?*

YEAH...

...AND NO.

NOW THEN--TO WORK.

BADNIK PATROL! LET'S TAKE THIS DETOUR AND--

--NO! WAIT--WAIT-- *WAIT!*

GIVE *ME* AN ESCORT MISSION...

W-WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO RAISE ANY ALARMS...

THEY CAN'T MAKE A FUSS IF THEY'RE DUST!

B-B-BUT DR. STARLINE'S ORDERS W-W-WERE...

HE AIN'T THE BOSS OF ME. HE'S TECH SUPPORT AND THE "IDEA GUY." AND IDEA GUYS ARE A DIAMOND DOZEN.

I-IT'S "A DIME A DOZEN..."

I DO THINGS MY WAY--MY *OWN* WAY. YOU FOLLOW ME. IT'S SIMPLE, AND IT *WORKS.*

NOW, LET'S GET TO THAT TOWER ALREADY. MIGHT AS WELL DO THIS STUPID PLAN WHILE WE'RE HERE.

YES, MA'AM.

!

SHORT RANGE AND SINGLE TARGET VERIFIED! NOW FOR THE HARD PART.

EGG CAVE

I'M AHEAD OF SCHEDULE. I CAN AFFORD A SMALL DETOUR.

THIS IS THE TARGET?

YES. I WILL DISABLE THE OUTGOING COMMUNICATIONS.

HOW LONG IS *THAT* GONNA TAKE?

A FEW MINUTES?

OR I CAN KNOCK IT DOWN IN A FEW SECONDS!

NO--NO--NO! THEN EGGMAN WILL *KNOW* WE WERE HERE!

SO? BRING HIM ON! I'LL BURY HIM NEXT TO SONIC.

B-B-BUT TH-TH-THE PLAN...

WHAT IS IT WITH YOU AND PLANS?!

IT'S WHAT I DO!

THUD THUD THUD

I TAKE IT ALL BACK. YOU DO THE BORING NERD STUFF! I'LL PROVIDE COVER!

YES, MA'AM!

WOO-HOO-HA-HA!

SMASH

THIS WAY! I DON'T WANT YOU DISTRACTING THE KID!

WHOOM

SMASH

GET IT TOGETHER, SURGE! SONIC WOULD BE RUNNING RINGS AROUND THIS THING!

YOU'RE BETTER THAN HIM!

POW

HURRY--
HURRY--
HURRY...

THERE!
DONE!

GET BACK TO SURGE!

SUPPORT SURGE!

BE WITH SURGE!

WHAM

CRASH

HAHAHA! WHAT'CHU GOT, HUH?! HUH?!

I'M HERE TO HELP!

YOU MEAN KILL THE MOOD! I'VE GOT IT ON THE ROPES! IT CAN'T EVEN--

SURGE!

SMASH

OH, TO GO BACK TO THAT SIMPLER TIME.* IT WASN'T REALLY THAT LONG AGO, AND YET IT FEELS LIKE IT'S BEEN A LIFETIME...

*5TH ANNUAL 2020--EDS.

...BACK WHEN I WAS STILL ENAMORED WITH THE SPECTACLE. A NAIVE ADMIRER OF A BRILLIANT BUT FLAWED MAN.

THE VEIL HAS BEEN LIFTED FROM MY EYES. I WILL SUPPLANT THE DOCTOR AND PROVE MY METHODS SUPERIOR.

ONCE HE'S SEEN THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS, I WILL WELCOME HIM BACK TO MY SIDE, AND WE CAN RULE THIS WORLD TOGETHER.

GET BACK!

STAY AWAY FROM HER!

WHAM

SURGE...

...SURGE?! D-DON'T MOVE! YOU'RE--

--NOT HURT AT ALL?

I WAS...

...HOLD THAT THOUGHT.

BANG

CRASH

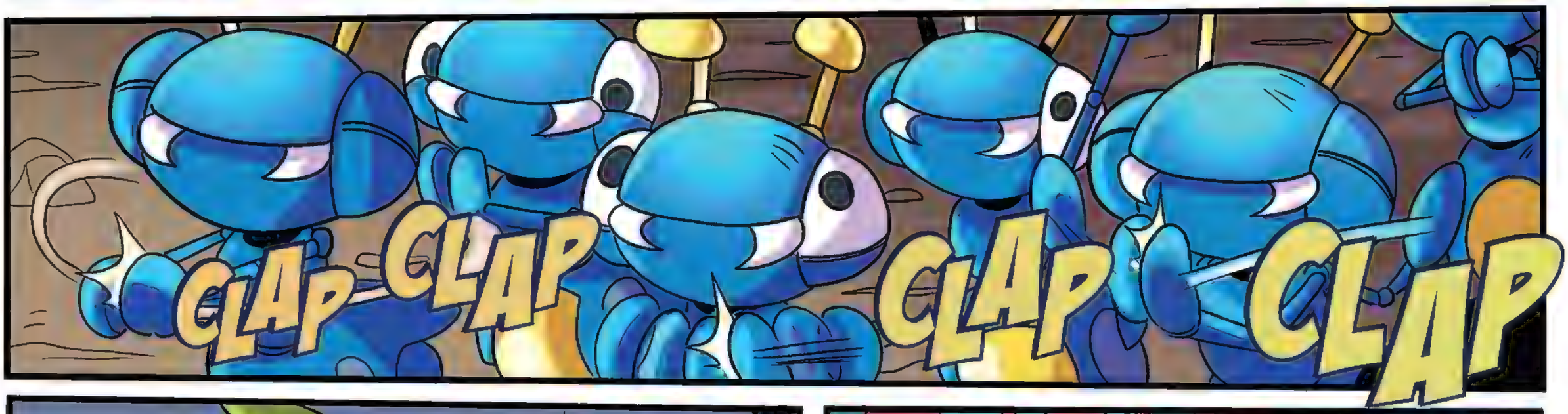
THAT'S WHAT YOU GET! SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU MESS WITH THE BEST?! HUH?! HUH?!

M-MA'AM?

WHAT?!

TH-THE FIGHT ALERTED THE OTHERS...

FINE. I'VE HAD MY WARM-UP. WATCH MY BACK WHILE I TAKE OUT THE FIRST HALF.
YES, MA'AM!


CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

WHAT THE...
EXCELLENT WORK! MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

THIS BASE, AND ALL ITS BADNIKS, NOW SERVE ME.
JOIN ME IN THE CONTROL ROOM, WON'T YOU?

SOON...

FLIPPIN' WEIRD...

TOP MARKS FOR EVERYONE! MY OVERRIDE PROGRAM IS A SUCCESS! NO ALARMS WERE TRIGGERED! THE PLAN WENT FLAWLESSLY!

WE MAY NOW FINALLY BEGIN MY MASTER PLAN!

AFTER A WARDROBE CHANGE. WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

W-WELL... SURGE WAS...

A LITTLE CARELESS. SO SUE ME. THE KID WAS A BIG HELP. IT'S ALL GOOD, DOC.

ARE YOU SURE?

LISTEN TO THIS GUY! JUST SAVOR THE VICTORY, YOU KILLJOY!

YES. WELL. I WILL OVERSEE CLEANUP TO ENSURE DR. EGGMAN DOESN'T FIND ANY EVIDENCE BEFORE WE MAKE OUR MOVE.

DISMISSED.

B-B-B-BUT...

SHUT IT. LET THE BUSY MAN DO HIS BUSY-WORK.

SEE ANY CAMERA? DETECT ANY HIDDEN MICS?

N-NO?

THAT HIT SHOULD'VE KILLED YOU! WE SHOULD TELL THE DOCTOR SO HE CAN MAKE SURE YOU'RE OKAY!

WE'RE NOT TELLING HIM *ANYTHING*.

B-BUT HE ENHANCED US! HE'D KNOW...

YEAH? ENHANCED US HOW? WHAT *EXACTLY* DID HE DO?

I... I DON'T KNOW...

UH-HUH. I KNOW A LOT OF *WHAT*, BUT NOT A LOT OF WHY.

MY OWN THOUGHTS AREN'T ADDING UP. I *KNOW* THE DOC IS THE CENTER OF IT.

I'M GOING TO NEED YOUR HELP TO SORT THIS OUT. I CAN COUNT ON YOU, RIGHT?

Y-YES, MA'AM! ALWAYS! ANYTHING!

WHERE DO WE START?

STARLINE NEEDS TO HEAR HIMSELF TALK. WE FIND HIS RECORDS. WE FIND OUT WHAT HE DID TO US. AND THEN WE MAKE HIM HURT FOR IT.

ART BY ADAM BRYCE THOMAS

ART BY MAURO FONSECA COLORS BY JOANA LAFUENTE

FILE: SON-1C0-250

EGGMAN... DR. EGGMAN... REJECTED ME. I WORKED... *SO HARD*... TO HELP HIM. AND HE... HE ROBS ME! HAS ME THROWN INTO THE WILDERNESS!*

*STH #25--EDS.

FILE: SON-1C0-250

IF HE WON'T *ACCEPT* MY HELP, HE'LL BE *MADE* TO *SEE!*

SEE THIS FRAME I PROTOTYPED?! IT'S *REVOLUTIONARY!* I WAS GOING TO SHOW HIM THE CONCEPT, BUT NOW I'LL GIVE HIM A *LIVE DISPLAY!*

A-A-AND IT'LL RUN RINGS AROUND METAL SONIC! WHATEVER IT TURNS OUT TO BE...

FILE: SON-1C0-250

NO SLOPPILY CONSTRUCTED BADNIKS! NO OVERSPECIALIZED VANITY PROJECTS! *YES! THAT MEANS YOU, METAL SONIC!*

BUT A VERSATILE, ROBUST, SUPERIOR CREATION!

FILE: 840-GU7-048

INTROSPECTION AND REVISION. TWO THINGS MY IDOL LACKS. TWO THINGS I MUST EMBRACE TO SURPASS HIM.

FILE: 840-GU7-048

MY TIME WITH ZAVOK AND THE OTHERS OPENED MY EYES.* MY INITIAL PLANS WERE SHORT-SIGHTED.

ALL THE POWER AND OBEDIENCE OF A MACHINE MEANS NOTHING IN THE CHAOTIC AND UNPREDICTABLE WORLD I'M TRYING TO CONTROL.

*STH: BAD GUYS #1-4--EDS.

FILE: 840-GU7-048

I NEED THE WILL AND INGENUITY OF A LIVING BEING. I NEED TO TAKE MY INITIAL DESIGNS AND FUSE THEM.

DR. EGGMAN HAS SPENT ALL THIS TIME INSERTING ANIMALS INTO HIS ROBOTS...

FILE: 840-GU7-048

...WHEN THE SOLUTION WAS THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

SWEET GAIA BELOW, DOES THIS GUY EVER SHUT UP?

D-DO YOU WANT ME TO LOG OUT?

NO, YOU DID GOOD HACKING INTO STARLINE'S FILES. KEEP DIGGING. I WANT MORE DETAILS.

SEARCHING. HIS ARCHIVES ARE... EXTENSIVE.

BEING A MAD SCIENTIST WASN'T BAD ENOUGH. HE HAD TO BE A WANNABE INFLUENCER, TOO...

AT LEAST WE KNOW NOW HOW HE ENHANCED US. SHOULD WE REALLY BE GOING BEHIND HIS BACK LIKE THIS?

WHEN I WANT YOUR OPINION, I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU. MORE DEETS. *NOW*.

Y-YES MA'AM! I THINK I FOUND SOMETHING...

FILE: P05-757-H44

THE CYBERNETIC ENHANCEMENTS HAVE TAKEN. MY BASE MODELS ARE COMPLETE. NOW COMES THE *SPECIALIZATION.*

FILE: P05-757-H44

I HAVE ASSEMBLED ALL THE NECESSARY INGREDIENTS TO EMULATE THE BIOMECHANICAL MIRACLES OF MY ADVERSARIES AND INSTALL THEM INTO MY CYBERNETIC ENFORCERS.

FILE: P05-757-H44

EMULATED, BUT NOT REPLICATED. SUBJECT "KITSUNAMI" WILL NEED EXTERNAL SUPPORT. SUBJECT "SURGE" WILL NEED ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PROPULSION.

BUT I'M AIMING TO *IMPROVE* UPON THINGS, NOT MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO.

FILE: P05-757-1144

BUT THAT MUCH POWER *MUST* BE KEPT UNDER CONTROL. ONCE AGAIN, I LOOK TO DR. EGGMAN FOR INSPIRATION.

FILE: P05-757-1144

I ACQUIRED THE PROGRAMMING OF ONE OF HIS MORE... UNORTHODOX CONSTRUCTIONS.

WITH HER, I HAD THE MEANS OF FABRICATING A PERSONALITY. OR RATHER *OVERWRITING* EXISTING ONES.

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FILE: P05-757-1144

MY CREATIONS WILL THINK WHAT I WANT THEM TO THINK. WANT WHAT I DESIRE THEM TO WANT. BE WHO I WANT THEM TO *BE*.

AND AS A FAIL-SAFE, THEY'VE BEEN MADE ESPECIALLY PRONE TO MY HYPNOTIC GEAR. JUST IN CASE THEY NEED... REALIGNMENT.

SUBJECT: "SURGE."
SESSION 005.

YOU HATE SONIC. YOU WANT TO DESTROY SONIC.

I HATE SONIC. I WANT TO DESTROY SONIC.

SUBJECT: "KITSUNAMI."
SESSION 002.

YOU LIVE TO SUPPORT SURGE. YOU WILL DO ANYTHING FOR HER.

LIVE... FOR SURGE. DO. ANYTHING...

SUBJECT: "SURGE."
SESSION 050.

YOU HATE SONIC. YOU WANT TO DESTROY SONIC.

I HATE SONIC. I WANT TO *DESTROY* SONIC.

SUBJECT: "KITSUNAMI."
SESSION 015.

YOU LIVE TO SUPPORT SURGE. YOU WILL DO ANYTHING FOR HER.

I LIVE TO SUPPORT SURGE. I WILL DO ANYTHING FOR HER.

SUBJECT: "SURGE."
SESSION 232.

AND WHAT OF THE WORLD-RENOWNED HERO, SONIC?

PSSHT. I ***HATE*** THAT JERK. I'LL WIPE MY SHOES ON HIS GRAVE AFTER I PUT HIM IN IT.

SUBJECT: "KITSUNAMI."
SESSION 033.

AND WHAT OF YOUR PARTNER, SURGE?

I LOOK OUT FOR HER! NO MATTER WHAT! I'LL DO ANYTHING FOR HER! WHERE IS SHE? CAN I SEE HER NOW?

FILE: PR3-1MP-SYM

=SIGH= SO. I HAD REPURPOSED THE RESILIENCE OF THE METAL VIRUS INTO SAFE CELLULAR UPGRADES TO SUPPLEMENT THE ENHANCEMENT CYBERNETICS.

SURGE AND KITSUNAMI ARE *EXCEEDINGLY* RESILIENT. *PHYSICALLY.* BUT...

...INSERT FILE FOOTAGE HERE...

TEST SESSION 003.

TEST SESSION 044.

TEST SESSION 105.

TEST SESSION 105.

I'M NOT RUNNING IT AGAIN! YOU WANT DATA?! YOU RUN IT!

TEST SESSION 337.

TEST SESSION 450.

TEST SESSION 529.

TEST SESSION 601.

SURGE IS STARTING HER RUN *RIGHT NOW*. WHAT ARE YOU DOING *HERE*?

I-I-I'M S-S-SORRY...

FILE: PR3-1MP-SYM

AN UNFORESEEN NECESSITY FOR THE HYPNOTIC VULNERABILITY HAS BEEN DEALING WITH THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA.

I CAN'T ERASE THEIR MEMORIES ENTIRELY. THEY'RE *LEARNING*. *IMPROVING*.

SO WITH EACH REVIVAL, I MUST SUPPRESS AND EDIT. IT'S TEDIOUS, BUT THEY ARE MAKING PROGRESS.

WHAT'S THE EXPRESSION? "NO PAIN, NO GAIN"? HOPEFULLY THEY'LL BE READY FOR FIELD-TESTING SOON.

OKAY. LOOK UP--

CAN WE PLEASE STOP? I DON'T WANT TO KNOW ANYMORE.

LOOK *UP* WHO WE WERE.

WHAT?

YOU HEARD HIM. WE'RE ***CYBORGS***. HE PUT STUFF IN US, BUT HE DIDN'T ***MAKE*** US.

SO WHO ***WERE*** WE? VOLUNTEERS? KIDNAPPED? HEROES? CONVICTS?! ***WHO WERE WE BEFORE THIS?!***

THERE'S... NO RECORD...

HE MAKES A VLOG OVER WHAT HE MADE FOR BREAKFAST! ***LOOK HARDER!***

I--I--I DID! IT'S N-N-NOT THERE!

WHY NOT?!

BECAUSE IT'S IRRELEVANT.

IT'S PAST YOUR BEDTIME, CHILDREN.

IT'S NOT "IRRELEVANT"! I NEED *CONTEXT!* IF I HAVE NO PAST, ALL I HAVE IS *THIS!*

AND "THIS" IS NOTHING! I'M NOBODY! I-I-I'M JUST A KNOCKOFF!

EVERYTHING I WANT--THAT I THINK I WANT-- IS A LIE!

OH, SURGE... WE KEEP HAVING THIS CONVERSATION...

...AND IT ALWAYS ENDS THE SAME WAY.

NO, NO, NO, NOT AGAIN!

KIT! GET HIM!

WHAM

AAAH!

BOOM

GOTTA PICK ONE FLAVOR OFF YOUR TRICORE AT A TIME, DOC! YOU WANT POWER?

OR SPEED?!

TOO BAD YOU BUILT ME FOR BOTH!

AUGH!

I'VE INVESTED TOO MUCH INTO YOU, BUT I WILL PUNISH YOU FURTHER IF NECESSARY.

...FIRST? YOU MADE ME HEAL REAL FAST. AND SECOND?

YOU FORGOT ABOUT KIT.

NO!

YOU MORON...

HOLD HIM.

SHUT. UP.

DON'T DO THIS! I'M THE *ONLY* ONE WHO KNOWS YOUR PASTS! THE *ONLY* ONE WHO CAN MAINTAIN YOUR ENHANCEMENTS!

I BUILT YOU FOR A HIGHER PURPOSE! WE WILL--

SO... NOW WHAT?

NOW? =SNIFF= NOW?!

WE BURN IT ALL DOWN! SONIC! EGGMAN! EVERY IDIOT THAT FOLLOWS EITHER OF THEM!

WE END IT ALL! NO MORE HEROES! VILLAINS! *NOTHING!*

IF WE DON'T GET A PAST, THEY DON'T GET A FUTURE!

OKAY.

HOW?

DON'T KNOW, DON'T CARE. MAYBE I'LL START WEARING OFF THE TREADS ON HIS BRAIN?

I WON'T STOP YOU. MAY I OFFER AN IDEA FIRST?

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE SMART ONE. LET'S HEAR IT.

STARLINE WAS ALREADY PLANNING TO BRING EVERYONE TOGETHER.

WE COULD USE HIS PLAN, UP TO A POINT, THEN TAKE IT IN OUR OWN DIRECTION. DESTROY SONIC AND TAILS, AS PLANNED, AND GO ON TO DESTROY THE DOCTORS, TOO.

I-IF THAT'S OKAY WITH YOU, MA'AM.

I CAN WORK WITH THAT.

LET THE DOC GO TO ALL THIS TROUBLE JUST TO SET HIMSELF UP FOR THE FALL?

WHUTWUZAYE... WHERE AM...

WHAT...

YOU FINALLY AWAKE, DOC? PRETTY SAD YOU PUT YOURSELF TO SLEEP WITH YOUR OWN MONOLOGUE.

MY OWN...

YOU WERE FILLING US IN ON THE DETAILS ON HOW YOU MADE US. "PRE-MISSION PREP" OR SOME NONSENSE. I WASN'T PAYING FULL ATTENTION.

I DID?

SURE DID.

AND YOU'RE... FINE WITH THIS?

WELL, IF I WASN'T BEFORE, I'M PRETTY SURE YOU WIPED THAT OUTTA MY BRAIN.

YOU MADE US POWERHOUSES. WHO AM I TO COMPLAIN?

ALL I HAVE TO DO TO GET A LIFETIME OF HERO WORSHIP IS DUST SOME EGO-DRIVEN JERK, RIGHT?

EASY SELL.

KIT'S COOL WITH IT, TOO. RIGHT, KID?

YES, MA'AM.

HE IS BECAUSE I SAY HE IS.

YES, MA'AM.

HA! WELL THEN... GOOD. I'M GLAD WE'RE PAST THAT MILESTONE.

I REALLY OUGHT TO STICK TO MY SCHEDULE IF I'M WORKING MYSELF TO EXHAUSTION LIKE THAT, THOUGH...

NOW THAT WE'VE GOT THE BORING STUFF OUT OF THE WAY, WHAT'S THE PLAN, BOSS?

WELL... WHY NOT? I SEEM TO HAVE CAUGHT A SECOND WIND. I'LL BE BRIEF, THOUGH. I DON'T WANT THIS HEADACHE TO ESCALATE.

AS THE RESTORATION FOCUSED ON REBUILDING, SO, TOO, DID DR. EGGMAN. WE'LL BE INVADING HIS NEW CAPITAL CITY, WHICH IS WHERE I'LL UPLOAD MY OVERRIDE PROGRAM.

SCRAMBLE THE EGGMAN WITH HIS OWN BOTS. LOVE IT!

NO. WE ARE TO PACIFY DR. EGGMAN. SONIC AND TAILS ARE OUR ONLY TERMINAL TARGETS.

MY BAD.

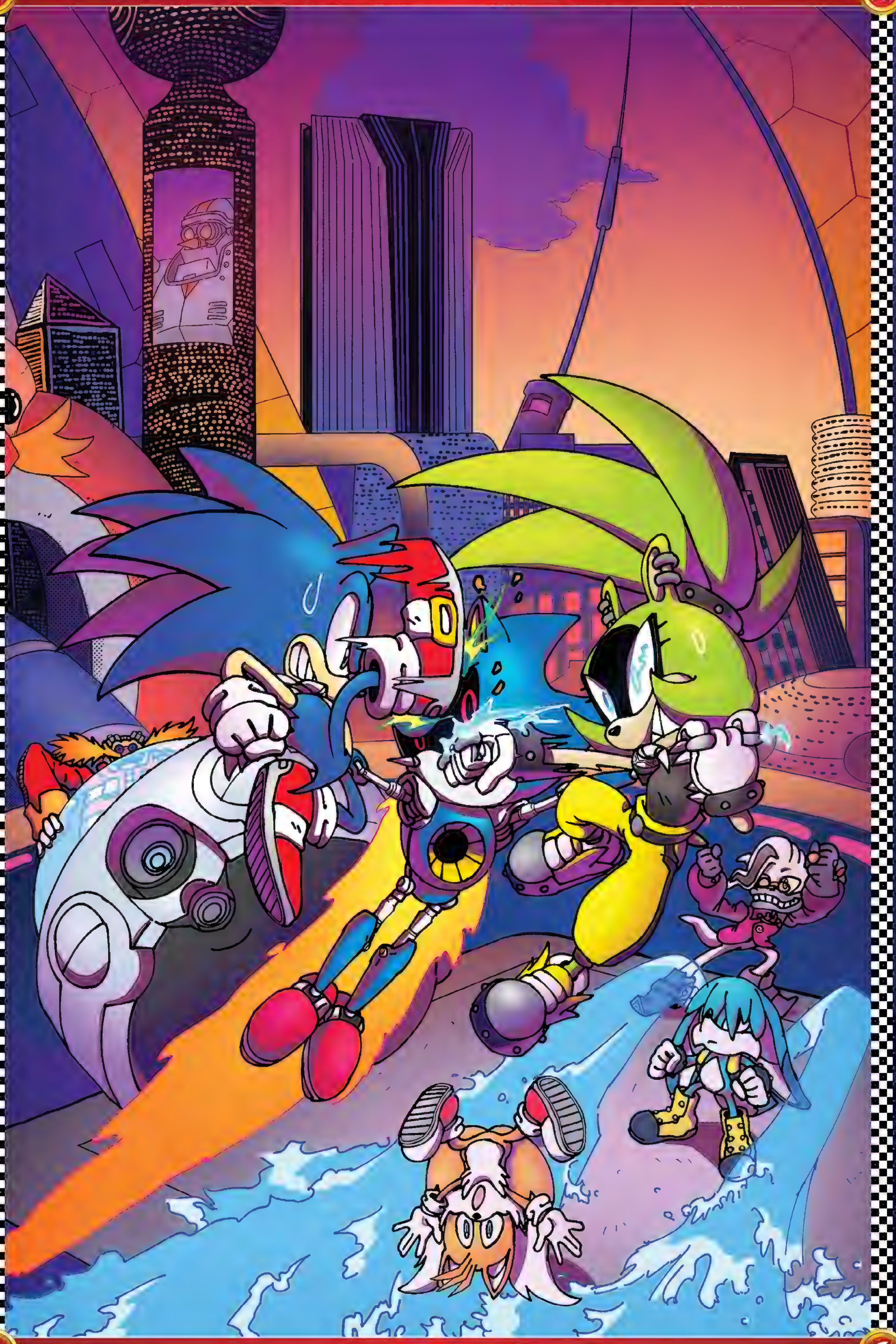
OUR ACTIVITIES THERE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY GRAB THE ATTENTION OF THE HEROES AND LURE THEM IN.

THE BADNIKS WILL BE SUFFICIENT FOR ANCILLARY SUPPORT, FREEING YOU TWO UP TO FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WERE MADE FOR.

ONCE YOU'VE SEPARATED AND CORNERED YOUR TARGETS, YOU WILL STRIKE WITH ALL YOUR FEROCITY AND WITH ZERO REMORSE...

ART BY AARON HAMMERSTROM COLORS BY PRISCILLA TRAMONTANO

ART BY MAURO FONSECA COLORS BY JOANA LAFUENTE



EARLY INTO THE METAL VIRUS PLAGUE...

MAY I ASK A QUESTION ABOUT YOUR METHODS, SIR?

YOU MAY.

WHY ALL THE THEME PARKS?

I LIKE THEME PARKS.

YES, BUT... THEY AREN'T REMOTELY PRACTICAL.

ALL THAT TIME, ALL THOSE RESOURCES, COULD BE USED MORE... ECONOMICALLY.

I DON'T SETTLE FOR THE WORLD AS IT IS, DOCTOR. I MAKE IT WHAT I WANT IT TO BE.

IF I WANT MY ENEMIES' LAST MOMENTS TO BE CAROUSEL MUSIC AND THE SMELL OF PETROLEUM-BASED COTTON CANDY, THAT'S WHAT I'LL MAKE HAPPEN.

WORDS TO LIVE BY, SIR!

AND NO LESS INSPIRING, EVEN AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED.

NOW.

TONIGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF THE END. DR. EGGMAN'S WASTEFUL WAYS. SONIC'S ENDLESS, FUTILE WAR WITH HIM.

THE SUN WILL RISE ON A NEW ERA! ONE WHERE WE CONTROL THE NARRATIVE! WE WILL GUIDE THE PEOPLE OF THIS WORLD OUT OF THEIR COMPLACENCY!

TODAY BEGINS MY GLORIOUS NEW AGE OF CHAOS AND TRANSFORMATION!

SURGE?

LET'S DO IT, DOC!

KITSUNAMI?

R-READY, SIR!

THEN LET US BEGIN.

WINDOW

POW

KEEP DRAWING THEIR FIRE WHILE I UPLOAD THE OVERRIDE PROGRAM!

YES, SIR.

WE MUST MAKE ENOUGH OF A DISTRACTION SO THAT DR. EGGMAN DOESN'T REALIZE HIS SYSTEMS ARE BEING COMPROMISED.

MY ISSUES WITH STAR-LAME ASIDE, I DO LIKE THIS PART OF THE PLAN...

...UNRESTRAINED, WANTON DESTRUCTION!

GRAB ON, DRIPPY!

BOOM

IT *IS* ALL RIGHT WE'RE USING DR. STARLINE'S PLAN AGAINST HIM... RIGHT?

EVERY DIRTY DEED WE DO TODAY IS JUSTIFIED, LITTLE MAN.

THE ONLY PERSON YOU SHOULD EVER BE LOYAL TO...

...IS ME!

SHUNK

DO YOU THINK THE BOSS WILL BE MAD WE WENT ON VACATION WITHOUT ASKING PERMISSION?*

I SAY WE HAVE FIFTY-FIFTY ODDS HE DIDN'T NOTICE WE WERE GONE. IF HE DIDN'T, WE'RE IN THE CLEAR.

AND IF HE DID?

THEN IT'S BEEN NICE KNOWING YOU, PAL.

*STH #40--EDS.

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?!

OH, Y'KNOW, JUST GETTING A LITTLE R&R--*ERK!*

WHAT HE MEANS IS WE WERE CONDUCTING RECONNAISSANCE AND...

...MORE RECONNAISSANCE?

WHATEVER. JUST LOG BACK INTO THE NETWORK AND GET ME A SITREP.

I'M GETTING REPORTS SONIC AND TAILS ARE MAKING A MESS.

THIS IS... CURIOUS.

THE BATTLE DATA MATCHES SONIC'S AND TAILS'S PROFILES, BUT THE DETAILS ARE INCONGRUENT.

WHAT ARE YOU YAMMERING ON ABOUT?

PULLING UP A VISUAL NOW, BOSS.

WHO IN THE WORLD ARE THESE TWO?

THEY'RE NOT ON FILE, AND THE SECURITY ALGORITHMS CAN'T AGREE WHETHER THEY'RE SONIC AND TAILS OR NOT.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT HERE IS THEY'RE *WRECKING MY STUFF!*

I HAVE JUST THE THING TO DEAL WITH PESKY SPEEDSTERS AND THEIR BRATTY COMPANIONS, THOUGH.

THIS IS THE BEST EGGMAN HAS TO OFFER?

PFFT. ONLY REASON SONIC HASN'T WON IS BECAUSE HE CLEARLY ISN'T TRYING.

GRACK

FINALLY! A CHALLENGE!

SPLAT

VREE-VREE-VREE

SFANG

SUPPORT ME, KIT!

I--I-- I AM!

IN THE FIGHT, STUPID!

YOU WANT TO BE THE "REAL" SONIC?!

YOU AIN'T GOT THE HEART! YOU AIN'T GOT THE SOUL!

AND YOU AIN'T GOT THE BACKUP!

BRAK

NICE CATCH! DROWN HIM!

VREE-VREE-VREE

ZOOM

CLUNK

YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO BE SONIC. BECAUSE *I'M* GOING TO REPLACE HIM.

AND YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOOD ENOUGH TO BE MY FAKE.

HOW'S YOUR HEAD?

F-FINE! I'M HAPPY TO HELP IN ANY WAY!

HA! WE'RE GONNA GET ALONG *JUUUST* FINE, KID.

HOW DARE YOU! SONIC'S VICTORIES ARE BAD ENOUGH, BUT AT LEAST HE SHOWS SOME RESPECT!

UH... BOSS? I JUST NOTICED THERE'S A WEIRD LOG IN...

UPLOADING PROGRAM... 53%

DR. STARLINE?!

SALUTATIONS, SIR. SURPRISED BY MY RETURN?

NO, JUST THE MANNER OF IT. YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO COME BACK BOWING AND SCRAPING FOR DARING TO SASS ME!

NOT SKULKING AROUND ONE OF MY SERVERS AND... AND...

...WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

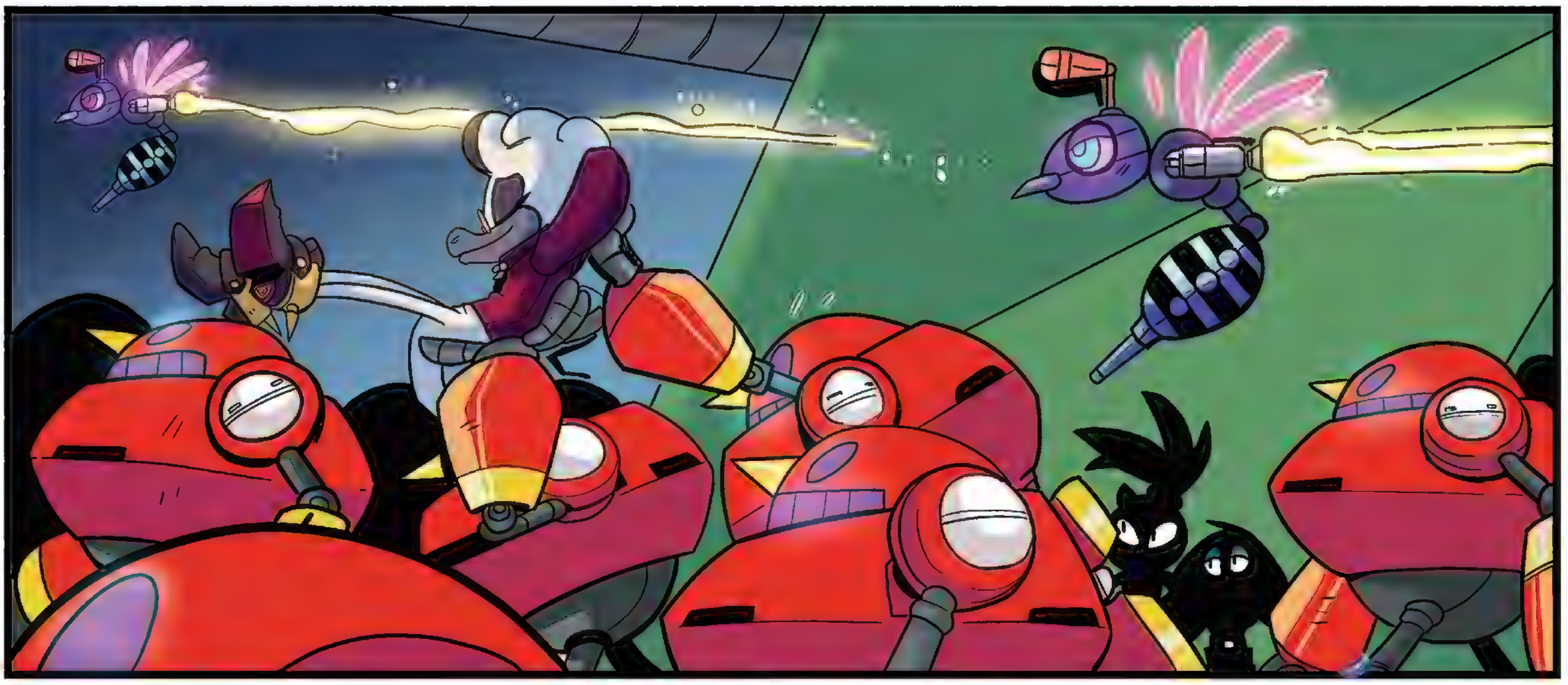
SUCCEEDING YOU, SIR.

YOU'RE TO BE CONFINED TO QUARTERS, OLD BOSS!

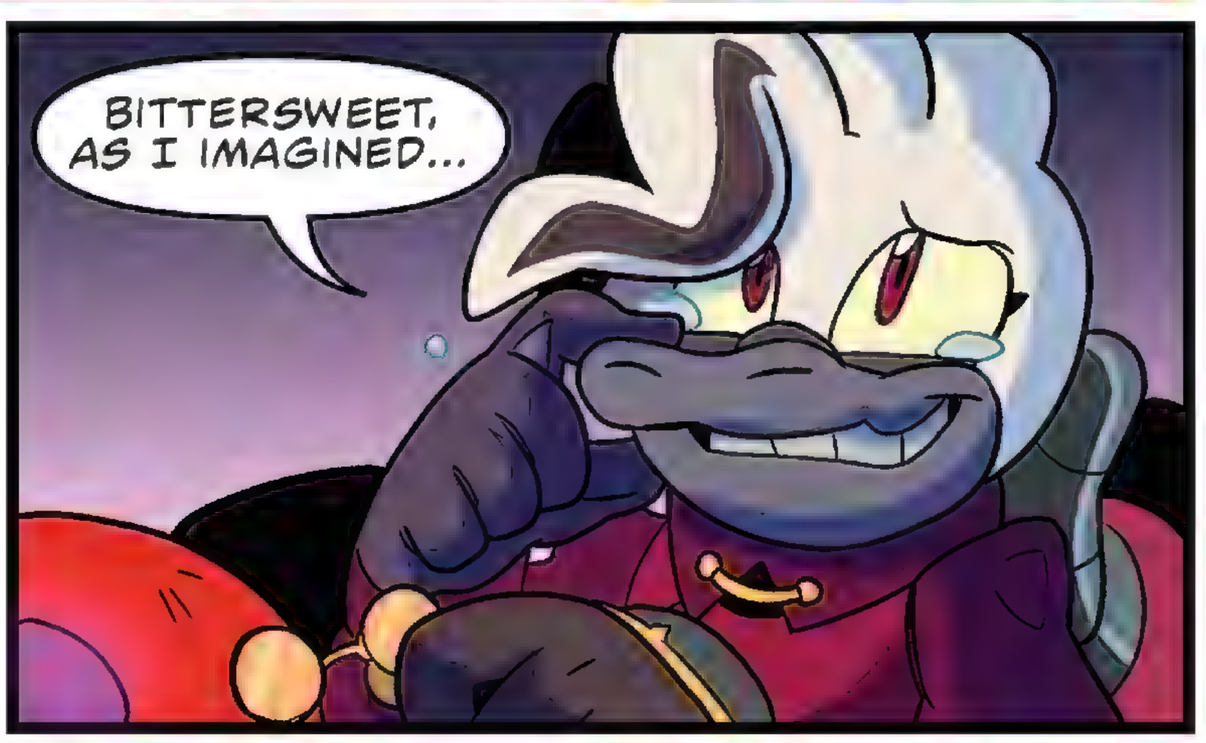
THE MASTER COMMANDS IT!

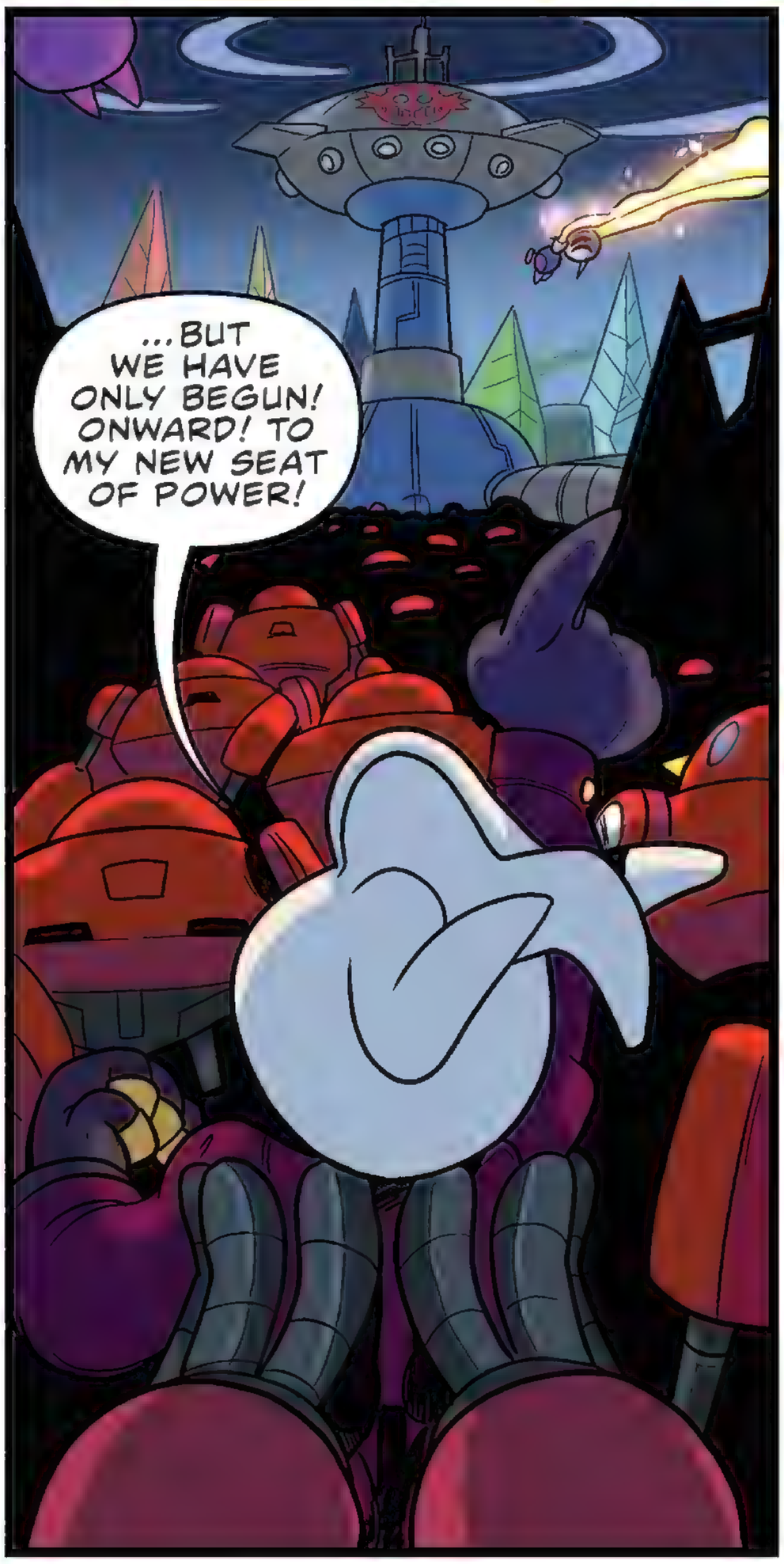
SCRUNCH

SHWOOP



IS IT EVERYTHING YOU HOPED IT WOULD BE, DOC?


BITTERSWEET, AS I IMAGINED...


...BUT WE HAVE ONLY BEGUN! ONWARD! TO MY NEW SEAT OF POWER!

WELCOME, NEW BOSS. YOUR WISH IS OUR COMMAND.

TRANSMIT THE OVERRIDE CODE ACROSS THE EGGNET.

BRING EVERY BADNIK IN MY STARLINE EMPIRE TO ME.

"SONIC WILL SURELY NOTICE. UNDOUBTEDLY INTERVENE.

"AND THEN BE CONFRONTED-- AND REPLACED."

THIS IS HOW IT'S DONE. PATIENCE, PLANNING, AND PREPARATION. EVERY VARIABLE ACCOUNTED FOR AND CONTROLLED.

TONIGHT... MY MEAL IS *VICTORY.*

...WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

EGGMAN SQUASHED ME BEFORE ESCAPING.

ESCAPED?! WHERE?

HIS PERSONAL CHUTE TO THE MEMORIAL GARAGE.

THE DISPLAY MUSEUM HASN'T BEEN FINISHED YET.

AH... PERFECTLY MANAGEABLE THANKS TO MY PREVIOUS PLANNING.

"WHATEVER HE USES WILL BE TAKEN OVER ONCE HE GOES ONLINE.

"SEND A DETACHMENT TO GENTLY TAKE HIM INTO CUSTODY."

I THOUGHT I'D HAVE TIME TO REFURBISH ALL OF THESE. OH WELL...

...THIS ONE WILL HAVE TO DO.

ALL SYSTEMS: FULL POWER

OFFLINE BOOT-UP COMPLETE... FULL MANUAL CONTROL ONLINE... READY TO LAUNCH.

THAT'S... AN INCREDIBLE NUMBER OF BADNIKS...

MEH. I COULD TAKE 'EM.

ONCE WE SMOKE STARLINE AND THE OTHERS, I'LL GET YOU TO REPROGRAM THEM ALL TO SELF-DESTRUCT.

WELL... HALF. I WANT TO SMASH SOME. MOST. EH, WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT.

ABOUT THAT... HOW WILL WE HANDLE SONIC?

I HANDLE SONIC. YOU HANDLE TAILS.

B-B-B-BUT...

IF THE EGOMANIAC COMES IN SOLO, WE'LL HANDLE HIM LIKE METAL SONIC.

BUT IF HE'S GOT THE BRAT IN TOW, IT'S YOUR JOB TO KEEP HIM FROM DISTRACTING ME.

ONCE THE "HEROES" AND DOCTORS ARE DONE, WE'RE FREE TO PLAY IT BY EAR.

HUNT DOWN ALL THEIR LITTLE FRIENDS, TOPPLE EVERY STUPID CITY THAT THREW 'EM A PARADE, TEAR IT *ALL DOWN*. JUST YOU AND ME, KID.

SOUND GOOD?

I CAN'T WAIT!

ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY YUI KARASUNO OF SONIC TEAM

WHY WOULD EGGMAN MAKE SUCH A BIG DEAL ABOUT SUMMONING ALL THESE BADNIKS?

THE GUY LIKES TO MAKE A BIG PRESENTATION. CAN'T FAULT HIM FOR THAT!

YEAH, BUT... DOESN'T IT USUALLY COME WITH SOME KIND OF DECLARATION?

NOT TOO LATE TO SIT THIS ONE OUT. NO JUDGMENT.

THANK YOU. BUT... I NEED TO SEE THIS THROUGH.

LIKE CLOCKWORK! SEND WORD TO SURGE AND KIT TO ENGAGE IMMEDIATELY.

SURVEILLANCE HAS IDENTIFIED SONIC, TAILS, AND BELLE ON APPROACH, NEW BOSS.

FINALLY! AFTER ALL THE PLOTTING, PLANNING, AND FRUSTRATIONS, MY DREAM IS *FINALLY* COMING TO FRUITION!

MY PERFECTLY CALIBRATED DOPPELGANGERS WILL DESTROY SONIC AND TAILS!

MY OVERWHELMING ARMY OF BADNIKS WILL BLITZ ALL GLOBAL RESISTANCE! AND THEN I CAN WELCOME DR. EGGMAN TO *MY* SIDE WHERE HE BELONGS!

EXCUSE ME, DOCTOR...

...YOU'RE IN MY SEAT.

SMASH

SUPERLATIVE ENTRANCE, SIR! *IMMACULATE!*

NEVERTHELESS, I'D HOPED IT'D NEVER COME TO THIS!

BECAUSE YOU KNEW I'D DESTROY YOU!

NO, SIR...

...I DIDN'T WANT TO EMBARASS YOU!

WHAM

EGGMAN IS... ATTACKING HIS OWN CITY?

NO, I THINK HE'S FIGHTING SOMEONE...

OH MY GEARS AND STARTERS!

THAT BADNIK LOOKS LIKE SONIC! IS THAT... *METAL SONIC?*

YEAH, AND SOMEBODY REALLY MESSED HIM UP. WHAT IS GOING ON TODAY?

I'M GOING TO FIX HIM.

I COULDN'T SAVE MOTOBUD. I KNOW I CAN'T SAVE EVERY BADNIK. BUT... I CAN'T ABANDON A ROBOT IN NEED.

I UNDERSTAND. JUST BE CAREFUL. HE'S DANGEROUS.

UM... YOU HAD *ME* REPAIR HIM AFTER THE WHOLE NEO METAL TAKEOVER THING, REMEMBER?*

*STH #12--EDS.

THAT WAS BACK WHEN WE THOUGHT EGGMAN WAS DONE AND DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT STARLINE! PLUS, YOU DE-WEAPONIZED HIM!

HE STILL HAD HIS METAL CLAWS AND A TURBINE TORSO.

MY POINT IS--

SONIC? WHERE DID YOU...

CRACK-BOOM

AUGH!

TAILS?!

AW, SAWDUST!

WHAT?! WHO?!

HELLO. I AM *KITSUNAMI*. YOU ARE MY TARGET.

SPLISH

SPLASH

HOLD ON A SECOND! WHY AM I YOUR "TARGET"? THERE HAS TO BE A MISUNDERSTANDING!

NO MISUNDER-STANDING. THIS IS ENTIRELY BY DESIGN.

IT TAKES APPROXIMATELY 118 MILLILITERS OF LIQUID AND 40 SECONDS TO DROWN.

THIS SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG.

GRK... WHO?!

CREEEECK

CLANG

:COUGH:
:COUGH:

I'M SORRY, HAVE WE MET? I'LL START. I'M SONIC THE HEDGEHOG.

OH, I *KNOW* WHO YOU ARE.

IT'S *ALL* I KNOW, REALLY. AND *THAT'S* THE *PROBLEM*.

I AM *YOUR* FAULT. STARLINE? EGGMAN?

SURE, THEY'RE PART OF THIS AND THEY'LL GET THEIRS, BUT IT REALLY COMES DOWN TO *YOU*.

IF YOU HAD JUST TAKEN THEM OUT, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN MADE!

OR IF THAT GOES AGAINST YOUR PRECIOUS "MORAL CODE," YOU COULD'VE JUST ROLLED OVER AND QUIT!

BUT *NO!* YOU KEEP ON FIGHTING! YOU KEEP ON GIVING IDIOTS THE FREEDOM TO REPEAT THEIR AWFUL MISTAKES!

AND IT JUST KEEPS ON GOING *AND GOING AND GOING!*

AND THE WHOLE WORLD *LOVES* YOU FOR IT.

SO I'M ENDING IT. *ALL* OF IT.

YOU. THE DOCS. THE WORLD. IT'S WHAT YOU ALL DESERVE.

MAYBE I SPOKE TOO FAST. LET'S TRY AGAIN.

HI! I'M SONIC THE HEDGEHOG. AND YOU ARE?

HEH. YEAH. OKAY. I'M SURGE THE TENREC.

AND YOUR "SPEED OF SOUND" CAN'T COMPETE WITH MY "SPEED OF LIGHT"!

I NEVER EXPECTED YOU TO BE SO CUNNING, STARLINE! BUT IT'S ALL FALLING INTO PLACE FOR ME.

THE STRANGE RAIDS ON MY FACILITIES DIDN'T MATCH ZAVOK'S M.O. SO I LOOKED INTO HOW HE ESCAPED PRISON.

THE WARDEN HAD SOME CHOICE WORDS ABOUT YOUR INVOLVEMENT! SUCH BRAZEN VICIOUSNESS!*

*STH: BAD GUYS--EDS.

SO WHY ARE YOU HIDING NOW, YOU MISERABLE LITTLE SCUMBAG?!

DON'T PANIC--*THINK!* YOU'RE *SO CLOSE!* THIS *CAN* BE *SALVAGED!*

HE MUST HAVE HAD A QUICK ESCAPE ROUTE BUILT INTO THE COMMAND TOWER.

IF I TAKE THE HEIGHT OF THE TOWER, THE SPEED WITH WHICH HE COULD SAFELY ESCAPE, THE PREP TIME TO LAUNCH THAT MECHA AND FLY BACK TO THE TOWER...

"...THEN THE HANGAR MUST NOT BE TOO FAR AWAY! AND IF HE'S PILOTING THAT OLD CLUNKER, THEN HE MUST HAVE MORE IN STORAGE! ERGO..."

BLAST IT ALL, STARLINE!

DON'T RETREAT TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY! HAVE SOME DIGNITY AND STAND YOUR GROUND LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO ATOMIZE YOU!

WHAT?!

SKYEW- SKYEW- SKYEW-

KA-BOOM

WHAT A MARVELOUS VINTAGE ARMORY YOU HAVE!

DOCTOR-- *PLEASE*--FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE JUST *STOP* AND *LISTEN!*

MY PLAN *WILL* WORK! AND THEN THE WORLD WILL BE *OURS!*

I DON'T SHARE!

BOOM

IF YOU *REALLY* UNDERSTOOD ME, YOU'D KNOW I WON'T SETTLE FOR LESS! IT'S ALL OR NOTHING!

AND *YOU* ARE *NOTHING* BEFORE ME!

SMASH!

ALMOST DONE! I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER THIS HIDING SPOT WILL BE SAFE...

...ESPECIALLY AFTER I BRING YOU BACK ONLINE.

THAT SIGNAL GOT TO ME AND MOTOBUD, AND *THAT'S* NO GOOD.

UNLESS...

YEAH! I'LL ACT AS A ROUTER AND USE THE ZETI ZAPPER TO BLOCK THE CONTROL SIGNAL TO YOU!

OH. Y-YOU'RE S-STILL A KILLER ROBOT BY DEFAULT, *HUH?*

Y-YOU SAVED ME? HOLD ON, WE'RE CONNECTED. I CAN ACCESS YOUR FILES...

YOU... RECOGNIZE ME AS EGGTECH. AND... LOOKS LIKE YOUR CONNECTION TO THE EGGNET LETS YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND DR. EGGMAN.

WELL... THIS IS IT, I GUESS. I CAME HERE FOR A REASON.

AND I CAN'T VERY WELL LET YOU GET OUT OF MY RANGE...

I HAVE TO ADMIT--YIKES!--YOUR CONTROL IS IMPRESSIVE!

YOU... LIKE THEM?

YEAH! I HAVEN'T SEEN THAT KIND OF TECH IN A LONG TIME, AND YOUR GEAR LOOKS MUCH COOLER.

IT'S... NOT MINE.

EVEN IF YOU DIDN'T MAKE IT, YOU'RE STILL OPERATING IT.

THAT TAKES A LOT OF SKILL AND FINESSE.

WHY ARE YOU BEING NICE TO ME? I'M TRYING TO DESTROY YOU.

GRANTED, BUT WHAT IF WE COULD FIND SOME COMMON GROUND INSTEAD?

YOUR TALENTS ARE PRETTY UNIQUE, AND I'LL BET NOT EVERYONE APPRECIATES THAT UNIQUENESS, AM I RIGHT?

I KNOW A THING OR TWO ABOUT BEING DIFFERENT.

IT TOOK A LOT OF PRACTICE TO REALLY GET A HANDLE ON THESE.

IT WASN'T EASY, AND IT'S THANKS TO SUPPORT FROM MY FRIENDS.

I GET THE FEELING YOU DIDN'T GET THAT KIND OF HELP. WOULD YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?

I DON'T NEED ANY FRIENDS.

THAT'S OKAY! I'M FINE WITH COMPETITIVE RIVALRY! CAN WE WORK TOWARD THAT?

DON'T... DON'T ASK ME WHAT I WANT...

...S-SHE'S NOT HERE SO I DON'T... I DON'T KNOW!

HE'S VULNERABLE BUT VOLATILE. I'VE GOT TO HANDLE THIS CAREFULLY...

MY THROAT IS GETTING SORE FROM SHOUTING. MAY I JOIN YOU?

W-WHAT?

LET'S CALL A TRUCE FOR NOW. JUST UNTIL WE'VE GOT THE FACTS SORTED OUT.

I... GUESS? YOU... UM... SURE?

THANK YOU.

FIRST, MAY I ASK WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE BADNIKS?

UM... STARLINE... SUMMONED THEM. HE'S... ARMY...

4pt

STARLINE...

...HE TRIED TO KIDNAP ME ONCE. I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT IT WAS PROBABLY FOR SOMETHING AWFUL. DID HE... HURT YOU?

...YES.

REPEATEDLY.

MADE ME FORGET.

MADE ME HAPPY IT HAPPENED.

I HATE HIM!

I WANT TO STOP HIM, TOO. CAN WE AGREE TO DO THAT TOGETHER?
Y-YOU'LL HELP ME?
SURE! IT'S WHAT HEROES DO!
THEN WHAT?
LET'S TAKE THAT ONE STEP AT A TIME. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS WE STOP HIS PLANS, RIGHT?
Y-YEAH... I GUESS SO...
GREAT! THEN LET'S FIND SONIC AND--
NO.
SURGE *HAS* TO DESTROY SONIC! IT'S *ALL* SHE WANTS!
I WON'T LET YOU STOP HER!

WHAM

=PANT PANT=

=PANT PANT=

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE TUSSLED LIKE THIS!

I HOPE YOU'RE HAVING FUN, TOO!

"FUN"?

YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HAVING "FUN"! THIS IS A DUEL TO THE DEATH!

YEAH, I'VE GOTTEN USED TO THOSE. I'VE ALSO FOUGHT A FEW FOLKS WITH THE WHOLE "THE WORLD WRONGED ME SO I'M GOING TO DESTROY THE WORLD" SCHTICK.

IT'S NOT A SCHTICK! IT'S WHO I AM!

I APPRECIATE THAT. I REALLY DO.

POW

!

I DON'T KNOW YOUR FULL STORY SO I CAN'T REALLY JUDGE. BUT I CAN'T LET YOU HURT ANYONE.

SO END IT!

NOPE. I'D RATHER GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO REBOUND.

YOU CAN'T BE *THIS* NAIVE.

I LIKE TO KEEP IT SIMPLE.

I LIVE FOR THE MOMENT. I WANT TO SEE THE WORLD, FIND ALL ITS THRILLS AND ADVENTURES, AND ENJOY THEM.

I WANT EVERYONE TO HAVE THE FREEDOM TO DO THAT, TOO.

AND YOU WOULDN'T GET THE OPPORTUNITY IF I TOOK THAT CHANCE AWAY FROM YOU.

I'VE MADE PEACE WITH ENOUGH ENEMIES TO KNOW THERE IS A BETTER WAY.

SO I'M WILLING TO CHALK THIS UP TO "A ROCKY START" AND LET US HAVE A DO-OVER, IF YOU WILL.

JUST LIKE THAT?

JUST LIKE THAT.

THE DOCTORS, TOO?

EVEN THEM.

TCH. REINVENT MYSELF, YEAH? CHOOSE WHO I WANT TO BE?

THAT'S THE IDEA.

SEE THE WORLD--

YEAH!

--THAT REJECTED ME?

YYY--NO. WHAT?

IF I VOLUNTEERED TO WORK WITH STARLINE, I OBVIOUSLY DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING GOOD GOING IN MY LIFE.

IF HE KIDNAPPED ME, NOBODY HAS TRIED TO FIND ME.

=SIGH=

FINE. WE'LL DO IT YOUR WAY.

YEAH! GIMME THAT FREEDOM TO DO AS I PLEASE! NO REGRETS!

NOPE! NONE!

'CAUSE I WON'T LET YOU TAKE THAT FROM ANYONE ELSE, EITHER.

YOU CAN CHOOSE TO BE A PROBLEM. WHICH MEANS YOU CHOOSE TO GET A WHOOPIN' FROM ME!

I WAS BUILT TO *END* YOU! YOUR MORALS! YOUR FRIENDS! YOUR WORLD!

I'M BURNING IT ALL DOWN AND DANCING ON THE ASHES!

I'M DOING THIS FOR YOU!

ALL YOU'RE DOING IS WASTING MY TIME...

...WRECKING MY STUFF...

...AND TICKING ME OFF!

BRAVO, SIR! I'M THRILLED YOU'RE STILL THE SUPERIOR MECHA PILOT!

BUT YOU CHOSE THE WRONG MACHINE TO FACE *ME!*

BEHOLD! THE EXACT POWER USED TO DEFEAT THAT VERY MODEL IN THE PAST!

BRACE YOURSELF FOR MY TRICORE BLAST!

THAT... IS WHAT HAPPENS... WHEN YOU DON'T... PLAN FOR... CONTINGENCIES...

NO, DOCTOR...

...YOU PLAYED YOURSELF.

I *SPECIFICALLY* CHOSE THE EGG EMPEROR ONCE I REALIZED IT WAS *YOU* WHO RAIDED MY POWER CORE RESERVES.

I *KNEW* YOUR OBSESSION WITH MY PAST EXPLOITS WOULD GIVE YOU LOGICAL TUNNEL VISION.

I *KNEW* YOU'D USE THEIR POWER--HOWEVER YOU'VE UTILIZED IT--TO ITS FULLEST EXTENT.

AND THUS, I *KNEW* YOU'D DEPLETE THAT POWER *JUST* TO MAKE YOUR POINT.

OH NO!

WELL PLAYED, SIR. I'M SO GLAD...

...YOU'RE SEEING THINGS *MY* WAY!

...WHY AREN'T YOU...

YOU TOLD ME *ALL* ABOUT YOUR INVENTIONS, REMEMBER? YOU WERE SO VERY, VERY PROUD OF THAT GLOVE IN PARTICULAR.

DID YOU *HONESTLY* THINK I'D LET YOU STAY BY MY SIDE WITH *THAT* KIND OF POWER ON HAND WITHOUT TAKING SOME PRECAUTIONS?

Y-YOU... ACTUALLY LISTENED TO ME? B-BUT YOU N-NEVER SAID... ACKNOWLEDGED...

...*NO!* THIS ISN'T FAIR! YOU'VE NEVER SHOWN THIS MUCH FORESIGHT!

I'VE MADE MY MISTAKES. ONE OF THEM WAS TOLERATING YOU FOR THIS LONG.

I *REFUSE* TO LOSE! NOT WHEN I'M *THIS* CLOSE!

CLONK

LITTLE MAN, WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU HAVE ANY CHOICE IN THE MATTER?

FATHER!

EH?

I FOUND YOUR LETTER. THE ONE YOU WROTE AS MR. TINKER. BEFORE STARLINE RUINED OUR LIVES.

HE DOES MAKE A MESS OF THINGS, DOESN'T HE?

PUTTING ME BACK INTO THE CORRECT FRAME OF MIND WASN'T ONE OF HIS MISTAKES, THOUGH.

I... KNOW THAT'S HOW YOU FEEL. AND I CAN'T CHANGE THAT. SO... SO...

...I'VE COME TO SAY GOODBYE. MY FATHER IS GONE. I HAVE... I HAVE TO MOVE ON.

"FATHER" THIS AND "FATHER" THAT.

WHY ARE YOU BOTH SO BLASTED CLINGY?

SO! IF YOU'RE NOT WITH ME, THEN YOU'RE AGAINST ME.

PLANNING ON DUELING METAL SONIC TONIGHT?

N-NO, SIR. I FIXED HIM, IN FACT. JUST LIKE HOW I'M GOING TO HELP ALL THE ROBOTS YOU ABANDON.

RRRUMBLE

HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO BYPASS THE CONTROL SIGNAL?

I--I--I USED MYSELF AS A SECURE ROUTER.

SO... YOU INTERFACED WITH HIS CODING DIRECTLY?

Y-YES?

OH-HO-HO! SPLENDID.

I SAID THIS WAS GOODBYE! OF COURSE I'M GOING BACK TO MY FRIENDS!

HAHAHA! VERY WELL! BE SEEING YOU, BELLE.

TELL YOU WHAT! YOU'VE DONE SUCH A GOOD JOB, I'LL GIVE YOU A CHOICE.

YOU CAN EITHER JOIN ME AS A MECHANIC OR YOU CAN GO BACK TO SONIC AND HIS BOTHERSOME BUDDIES.

WHAM

HEY! MOVE IT! THE STREET IS CAVING IN!

I PLANNED EVERYTHING OUT. DOWN TO THE SMALLEST DETAIL. I HAD EVERY ADVANTAGE. ACCOUNTED FOR EVERY CONTINGENCY.

AND I STILL LOST. I DID EVERYTHING RIGHT. HE DESTROYED ALL THAT EFFORT IN MINUTES.

I'M A FAILURE. AN UTTER, DISGRACEFUL FAILURE...

CRASH

RRUMBLE

WHAT IN THE WORLD?!

OW!

KER-SPLASH

YOU CAN'T EVADE ME FOREVER.

EVENTUALLY YOU'LL HAVE TO GIVE IN.

MAYBE, BUT YOU HAVE TO RUN OUT OF WATER EVENTUALLY.

AND GIVEN THE SIZE OF YOUR RESERVOIR, I'D SAY THAT'S RIGHT ABOUT... *NOW!*

HNNNGN

NO NO NO SHE'LL BE SO MAD NO NO NO.

NOW TO TURN YOUR PACK OFF BEFORE YOU CAN REFILL IT...

NO, NO, NO! SURGE, HELP!

THERE! NOW YOU... UM...

...HELLO? OH MAN, I HOPE I DIDN'T SHUT DOWN ANY VITAL FUNCTIONS!

CLICK

FALL DOWN ALREADY!

SORRY! I JUST DON'T QUIT!

IF YOU WON'T QUIT, THEN I'LL *END* YOU!

YOU CAN TRY!

POW

NYAUGH!

WHOA! SORRY. TEN-SECOND TRUCE SO I CAN HAUL YOU OUT, OKAY?

ZOT

YOW!

HEH. GOT THE LAST HIT.

SURGE?!

WHOOM

THAT'S THE REAL PROBLEM WITH GIVING PEOPLE A CHOICE.

YOU CAN'T STOP THEM FROM MAKING THE WRONG ONES.

I NEED TO FIND TAILS AND BELLE. WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE IS GOING WRONG TODAY?

TAILS? BELLE?

AW, MAN. IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO THEM...

I'M HERE! I'M OKAY! JUST A BIT DAMP.

GOOD TO HEAR!

WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?

HE SAID HIS NAME WAS KITSUNAMI AND HE WAS BENT ON STOPPING ME FROM INTERFERING WITH YOUR FIGHT WITH SOMEONE.

SURGE. SHE CAME AT ME, WE TUSSLED, AND THEN SHE WAS LOST TO EGGMAN'S NIGHTMARE CITY.

THAT'S TERRIBLE! ARE YOU SURE?

SHE WAS TOUGH, BUT I DON'T SEE HOW ANYONE COULD SURVIVE THAT.

OH, GOOD! YOU THOUGHT TO MEET BACK HERE! I'M GLAD YOU'RE BOTH SAFE!

HOW DID YOU KEEP THAT BADNIK FROM ATTACKING YOU?

HOLD ON! FIRST, WHERE IS METAL SONIC?

I GOT HIM UP AND RUNNING AGAIN.

HE WENT BACK TO EGGMAN AND THEY... LEFT.

AS FOR THE BADNIK? I DON'T KNOW.

I MODIFIED IT NOT TO ATTACK YOU GUYS, BUT IT WAS WEIRDLY FRIENDLY TO ME.

I'M PRETTY SURE DR. STARLINE IS BEHIND ALL THIS. HE'S WHO SENT KITSUNAMI AND SURGE, AT LEAST.

AGAIN WITH THAT GUY. WELL, WE'LL KICK HIS BUTT, TOO.

A-ABOUT THAT...

ATTENTION, SONIC AND TAILS! I'M AFRAID YOU'VE CAUGHT ME AT AN AWKWARD MOMENT!

MY EGGPERIAL CITY WASN'T READY FOR VISITORS, AND THEN THE *LATE* DR. STARLINE JUST *HAD* TO MAKE A MESS OF THE PLACE.

NEVERTHELESS, YOU ARE GUESTS IN MY HOME, AND I MUST BE A GRACIOUS HOST! SO PLEASE, ALLOW ME AND MY LUDICROUSLY MASSIVE SWARM OF BADNIKS...

...TO SHOW YOU A

PROPER WELCOME!

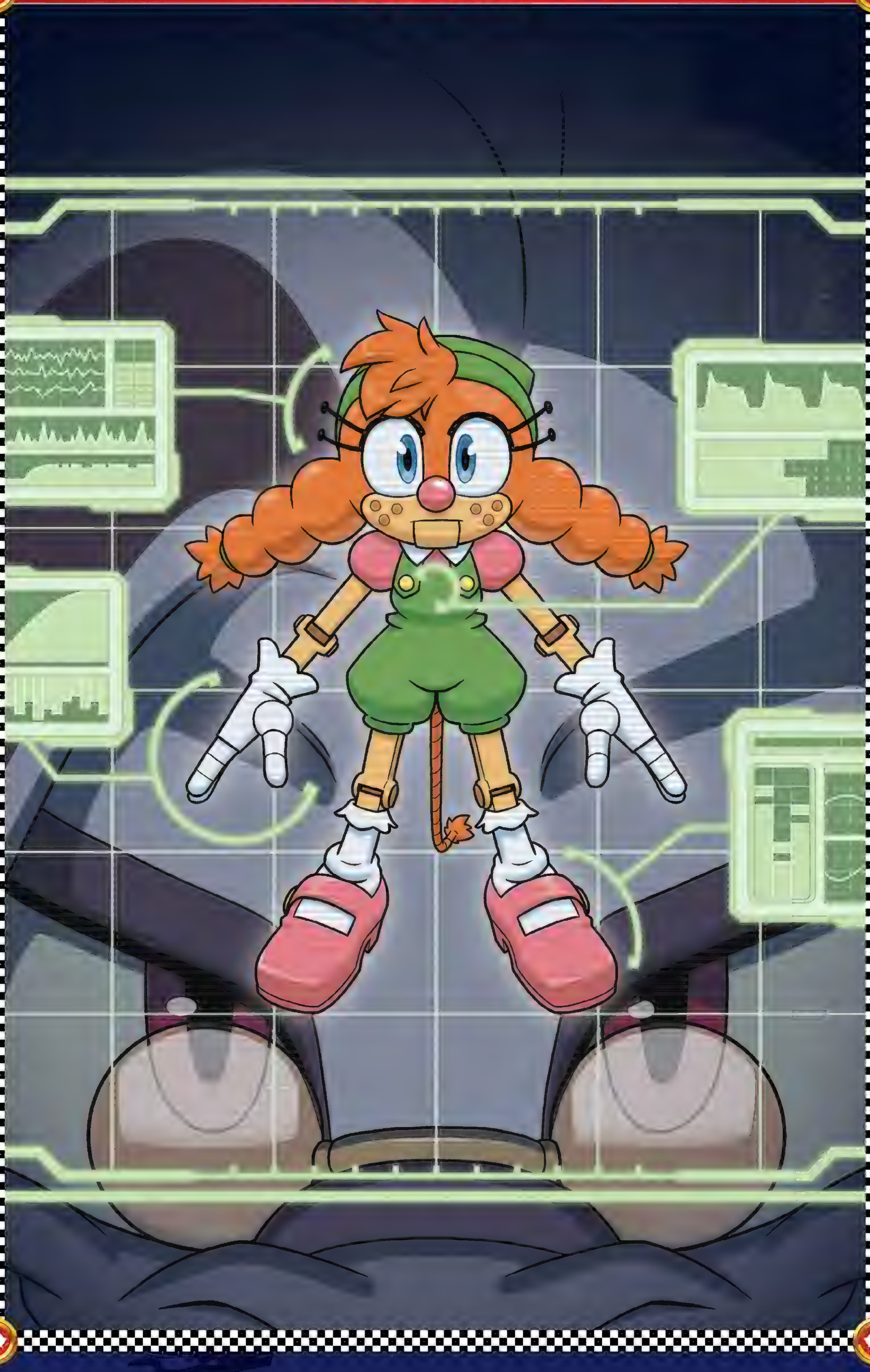
ART BY NATHALIE FOURDRAINE

ART BY NATALIE HAINES

ART BY **ABBY BULMER** COLORS BY **JOANA LAFUENTE**

ART BY MATT HERMS

ART BY JAMAL PEPPERS



ART BY DIANA SKELLY

ART BY RYAN JAMPOLE

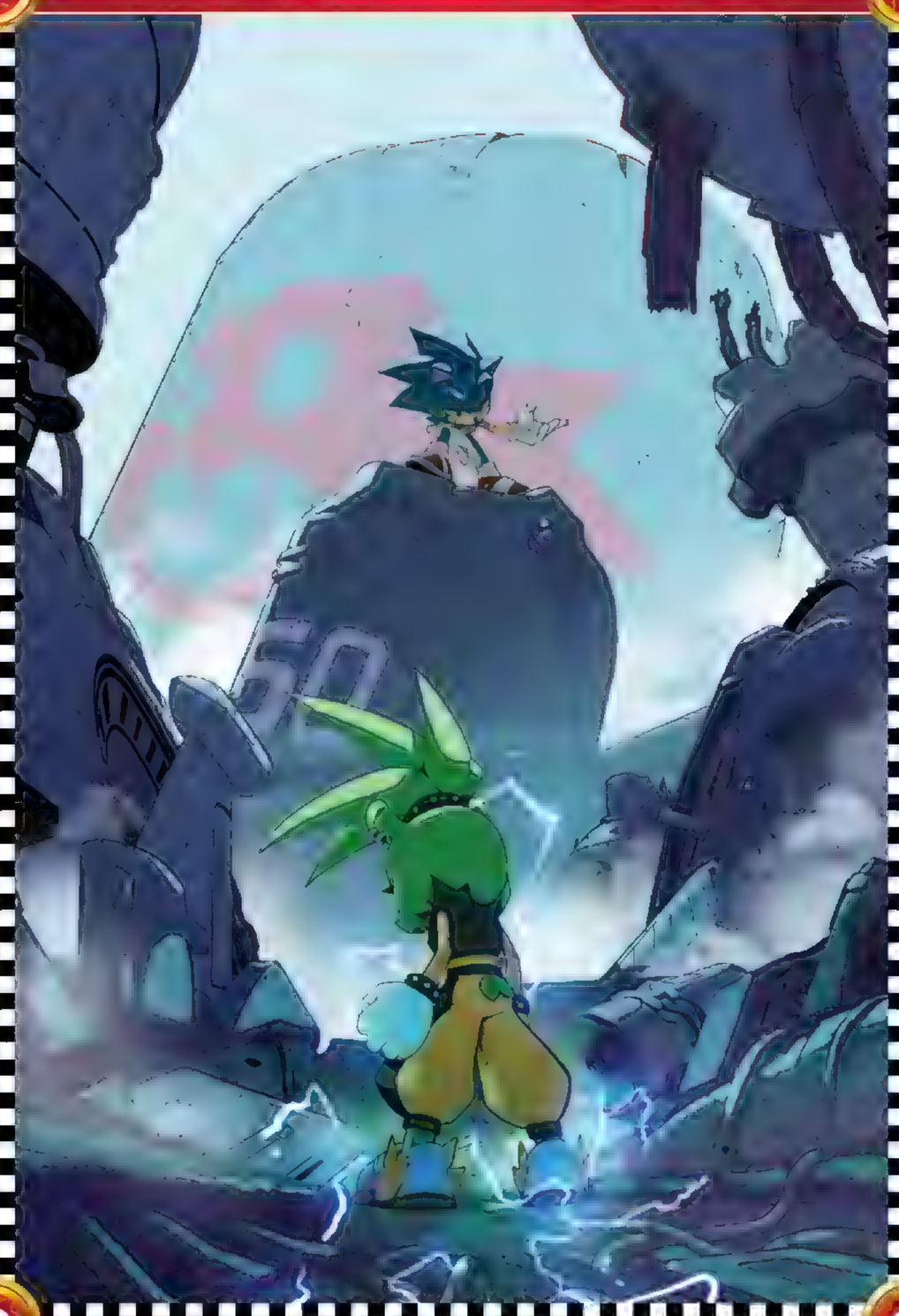
ART BY NATALIE HAINES

ART BY ABBY BULMER COLORS BY JOANA LAFUENTE

ART BY GIGI DUTREIX

ART BY EVAN STANLEY

ART BY ADAM BRYCE THOMAS COLORS BY MATT HERMS

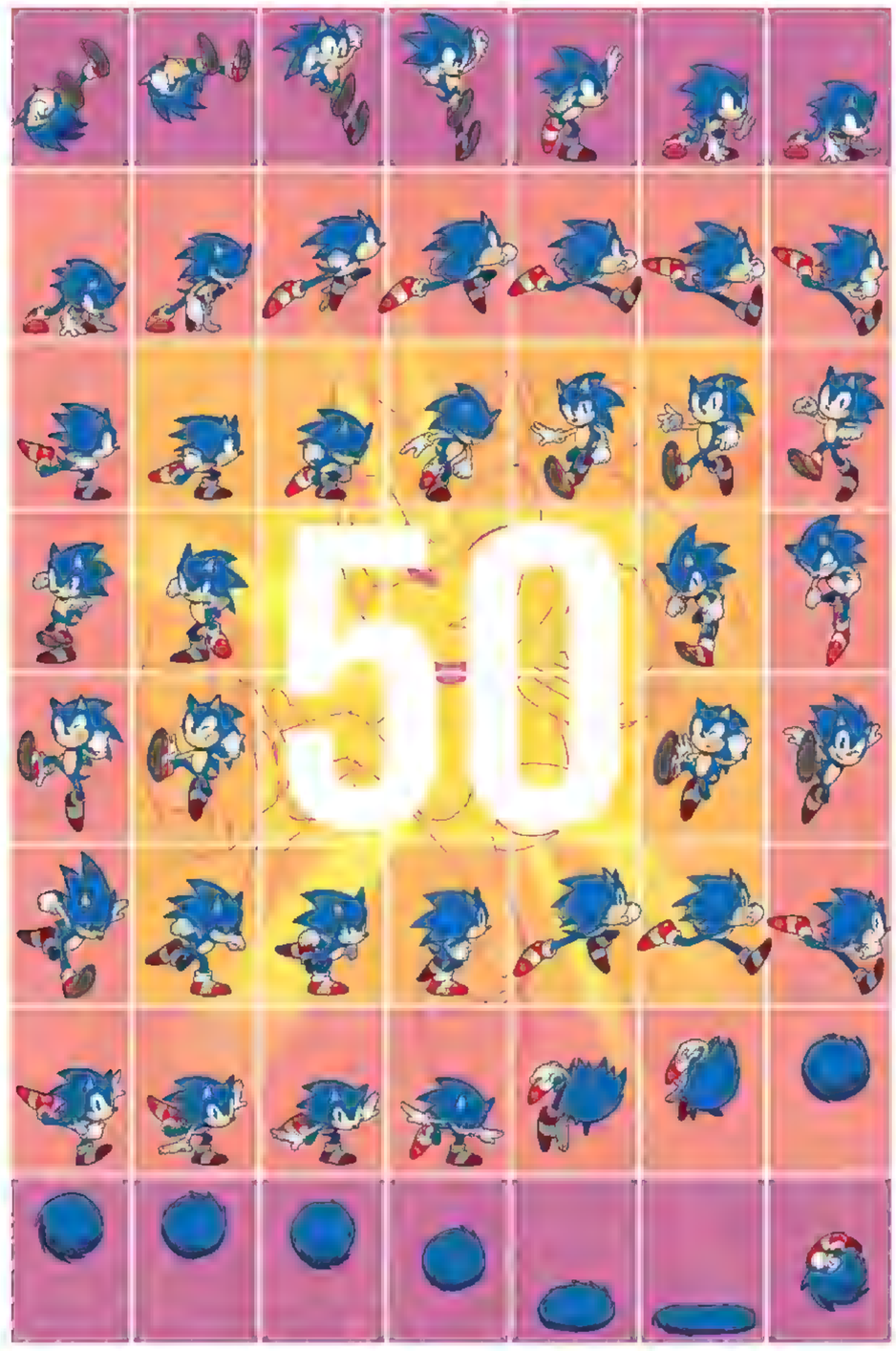


ART BY JONATHAN H. GRAY COLORS BY ALEAH BAKER

ART BY NIBROC SARKARIA

ART BY THOMAS ROTHLISBERGER COLORS BY VALENTINA PINTO

ART BY TYSON HESSE

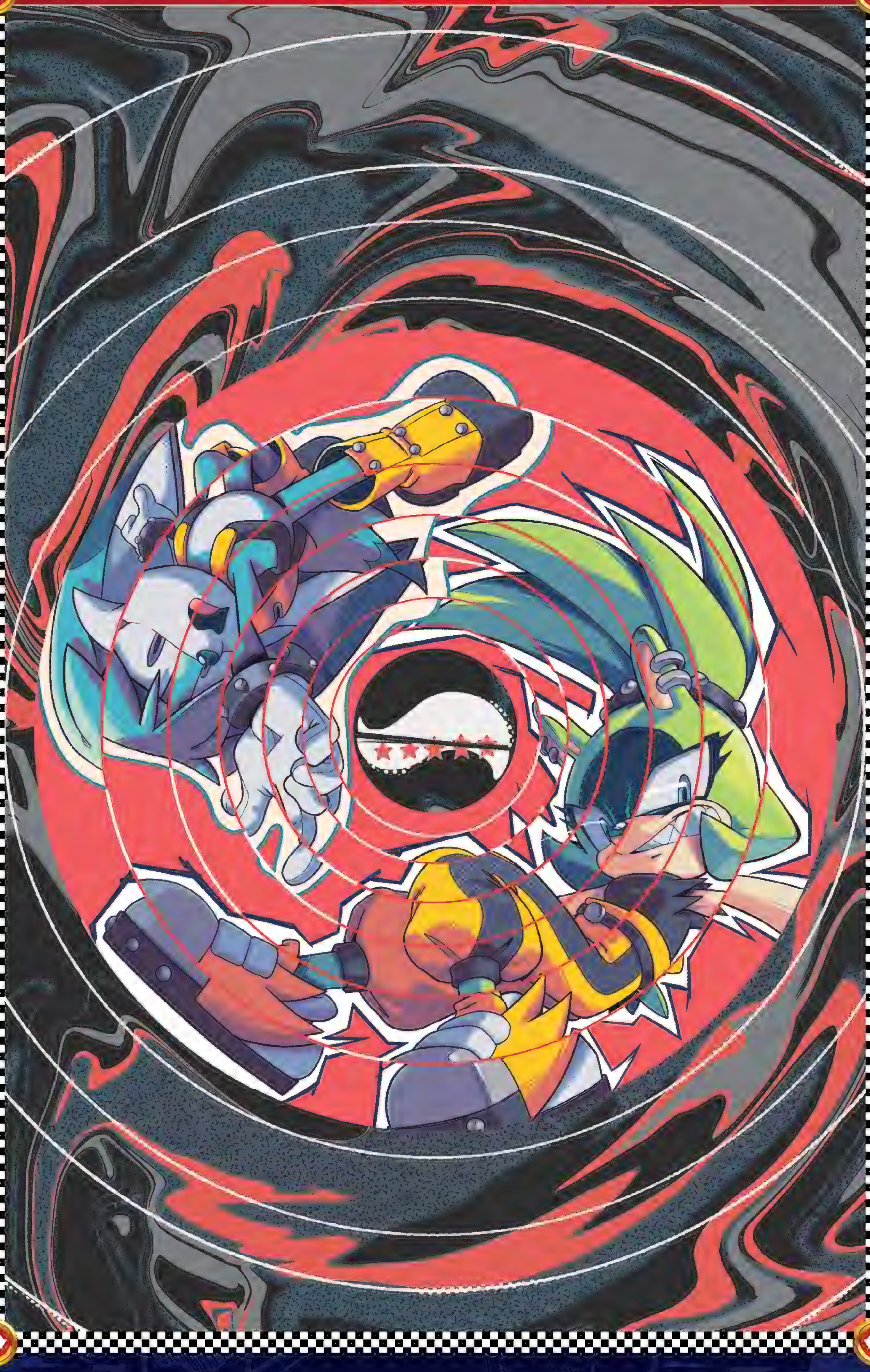


ART BY GIGI DUTREIX

ART BY THOMAS ROTHLISBERGER COLORS BY VALENTINA PINTO

ART BY GIGI DUTREIX

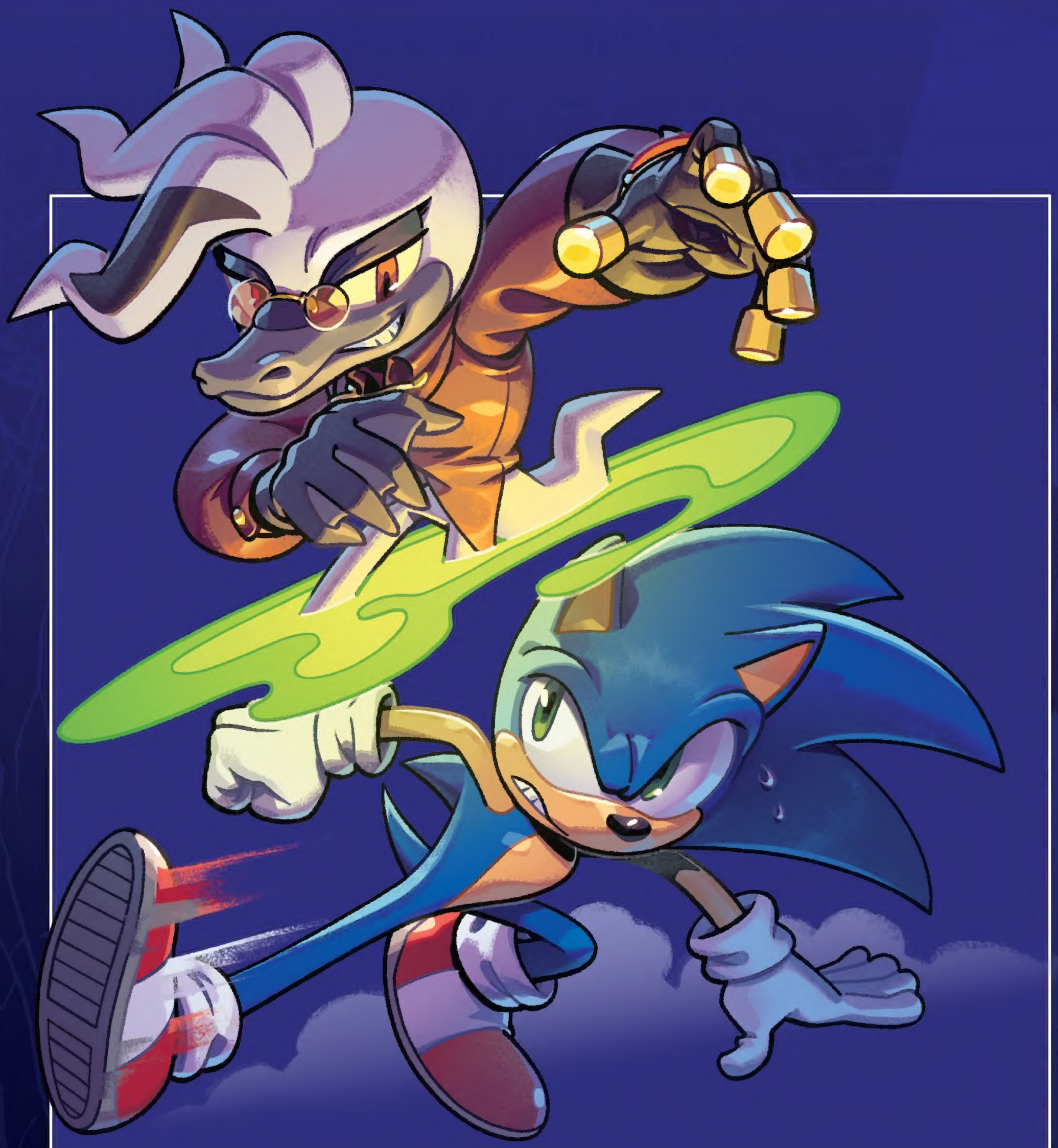
ART BY BRACARDI CURRY



ART BY NATALIE HAINES

ART BY **BEN BATES & MARI TAKEYAMA**

ART BY **GIGI DUTREIX**



THE DEADLY SIX ARE BACK FOR REVENGE, AND THEIR FIRST TARGETS ARE SONIC'S FRIENDS IN THE RESTORATION!

Zavok, leader of the Deadly Six, is angrier than ever and wants to reunite his group. Jewel has called on Sonic, Tails, and the Chaotix for help, but will they be able to stop the Zeti before they launch an all-out assault on Restoration HQ? Plus, Belle's got her own intruder to deal with, but it turns out they're here to steal her! Sonic's going to have to move quickly to stop all the mayhem.

Then, it's time for a road trip! Sonic's friends hit the pavement for some much-needed R&R after months of constant excitement. Amy, Jewel, Tangle, and Belle are heading off on a well-deserved camping trip. Between Dr. Eggman, Dr. Starline, and the Deadly Six, life has been stressful, so they're hoping to get a little peace. Unfortunately, a dangerous wildfire has other plans. Can our heroines extinguish the flames—and the group tension—before it burns out of control? Plus, Central City has been turned upside down by unmanageable traffic and bizarre elemental upsets, but Vector, Espio, and Charmy are sure to uncover the truth.

Collecting the *Sonic the Hedgehog* stories in reading order, Volume 5 features issues #41–50 of the *Sonic the Hedgehog* comic series and the *Imposter Syndrome* miniseries by writers **Ian Flynn** and **Evan Stanley** with artists **Adam Bryce Thomas, Thomas Rothlisberger, Tracy Yardley, Aaron Hammerstrom, Jamal Peppers, Bracardi Curry,** and **Mauro Fonseca.**

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